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Dynamic Compilations:
Reading Story Collections in
Medieval Francophone Manuscripts

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the compilatory dynamics of manuscripts containing francophone story collections in verse. It investigates how the hermeneutic, textual and paratextual frameworks of story collections, as ‘models’ of compilation, were conceived and read in multi-text codices, analysing in particular how paratext shapes textual boundaries, and how ideological agendas are established. The corpus comprises the manuscripts of three different story collections in order to illustrate common compilatory processes (modification, interpolation, extension, continuation, etc.) as well as the extent to which the specific character of the framework (and ‘generic’ identity) of the story collection affects its dissemination.

Chapter one addresses the five extant manuscripts of the *Fables Pierre Aulfons*, one of two thirteenth-century French verse translations of Petrus Alfonsi’s highly influential *Disciplina clericalis*. The dynamic approach to reading in this story collection framed by a father-son exchange is reflected in the variety of its co-texts. The diversity of the corpus illustrates its semantic malleability. By contrast, in chapter two, the multi-text codices of the Old French verse *Vie des Pères* are characterised less by the heterogeneity of their content than the multiple configurations of this story collection. Hence, the central focus is the textual and paratextual organisation of the manuscripts and how other material is integrated into the *Vie des Pères*. The final chapter brings together the principal approaches from the previous two case studies in its investigation of the manuscripts of the *Ysopet* attributed to Marie de France, examining in particular how the manuscripts construct the figure of the author and how this affects the reception of the fable collection.

By considering the reading practices underlying composition, compilation and manuscript production, and how textual and paratextual frameworks affect the reading experience offered by story collections and their co-texts, this thesis engages with the layers of reading embedded within the texts and inscribed in the codex. Moreover, it looks at how we, as modern readers, approach the medieval book.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis extends beyond the last four years of research and writing. Its origins go back to my undergraduate years, to the lectures and seminars given by my two supervisors. I would firstly like to thank Karen Pratt for her care, generosity, intellectual rigour, and for giving me this opportunity. Her belief in my research has sustained me through the last four years. Whilst the faults that remain are all my own, she has helped to refine both the scholarship and the scholar. My thanks also go to Simon Gaunt, whose stimulating and generous feedback and constant support have been invaluable.

I feel very lucky to have been part of the French Department at King's College London and to have had the opportunity to learn from such brilliant scholars and genuinely lovely people. I am very grateful to all those who read and commented on my work over the years, and special thanks are owed in particular to Emily Butterworth, Jo Malt, and Michael Meere.

This thesis would not have been possible without Hera's funding of the 'Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript' project. The thought-provoking research meetings, challenging responses to my work, and friendship of my colleagues have made this thesis a collaborative product. Bart Besamusca has been a generous and inspiring project leader and I am very grateful for his encouraging pep talks along the way. I thank especially Rachel Sweet, my fellow project member at King's College London, and the other junior researchers, Gerard Bouwmeester, Daniël Ermens, Gareth Griffith, and Nicola Zotz for everything they have taught me and their support. Special thanks are also owed to our inspiring project advisors, Olivier Collet and Richard Trachsler. As an 'unofficial' advisor, Roger Middleton has been exceptionally helpful and informative.

I am very grateful for the opportunities to consult manuscripts at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, British Library, Bibliothèque du Château de Chantilly, Cambridge University Library, the Biblioteca Universitaria of Pavia, and York Minster Library, and would like to thank the members of staff who assisted my visits. Thanks are also due to the librarians of Senate House Library, especially Michael Mulcay, and to the staff in charge of Interlibrary Loans at King's College London.

I have loved being a member of the welcoming community of graduate students at King's College and have made some very dear friends. A special mention is due to Jessica Stoll and Elliot Evans for their support and assistance at the most crucial moments, along with Alice Hazard, Zoe Roth, Ewa Shipoola and Jessica Stacey. I thank them for their intellectual generosity and the many inspirational cups of tea.

The encouragement and understanding of my wonderful friends and family has been humbling. They have been a consistent source of strength and humour, on the good days and on the bad. I would especially like to thank Becky Hodgson for being there when I needed her most. Words cannot do justice to the monumental love and support I have received from my parents, Sandra and Sameh, and my sisters, Sarah and Rebecca. And finally, I could not have endured this marathon without the patience, kindness, and daily nourishment provided by Arron Cowan. He has kept me sane and smiling right to the finish line.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ars.	Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris
BAV	Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City
BL	British Library, London
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
BR	Bibliothèque royale de Belgique/Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, Brussels
DC	<i>The 'Disciplina Clericalis' of Petrus Alfonsi</i> , trans. and ed. by Eberhard Hermes, translated into English by P. R. Quarrie (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977)
CHAS	<i>Chastoiement d'un père à son fils</i>
f. fr.	fonds français
FPA	<i>Fables Pierre Aufons</i>
KB	Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague
MTC	Multi-text codex
nouv. acq. fr.	nouvelles acquisitions françaises
NRCF	<i>Nouveau Recueil complet des fabliaux</i> , ed. by Willem Noomen and Nico van den Boogaard et al., 10 vols (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1983-1998)
PADC	<i>Petri Alfonsi Disciplina Clericalis, I. Lateinischer Text</i> , ed. by Alfons Hilka and Werner Söderhjelm, Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae, 38 (Helsinki, 1911)
SATF	Société des anciens textes français

Introduction

This thesis investigates the material witnesses of medieval literature. Printed editions have long played an influential role in mediating our reception of the written culture of the Middle Ages.¹ Thanks to the efforts of generations of editors, a wealth of literary material has been made readily accessible to study and to enjoy. Yet, dislocated from the original written context(s), the edition generates a ‘radically different’ reading experience from that of the medieval book.² This is not to say that editions do not have an important role to play. Rather, it is about valuing the medieval book not only as a vehicle of transmission, but also as a unique cultural object that merits its own attention. In addition to the inevitable divergences between multiple witnesses of a single text and the varied semantic contexts created by juxtaposition, the physical features of the medieval book provide compelling information that can suggest the medieval and shape the modern reception of a given text or codex. These include the type of parchment, structure of quires, paratext, and illustrations, as well as later additions, such as forms of *ex libris* and marginal notations. However, the interpretation of the medieval book can be troubling. These unruly objects often challenge our preconceptions about textual integrity, authorship, and genre. They frustrate for the information that they do not reveal. In very few cases do we know with any certainty why the contents of a particular manuscript were brought together, who made it, where, with what purpose, and for whom it was intended. This has not, however, deterred scholars of medieval French literature from rediscovering the medieval codex as a locus of meaning over the course of the

¹ Etienne Barbazan was one of the earliest editors to collect and publish texts from large multi-text codices. See *Fabliaux et contes de poètes français des XII, XIII, XIV et XVes siècles*, 3 vols (Paris: Vincent, 1756).

² Keith Busby, *Codex and Context: Reading Old French Verse Narrative in Manuscript*, 2 vols (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), p. 3.

last twenty-five years, in a critical renaissance that has seen the manuscript return to the forefront of the discipline.³

In recent years, investigations into the medieval practice of *mise en recueil* have sought to gain a better understanding of the organisational principles that might govern (locally or globally) the arrangement of multi-text codices.⁴ This is especially significant for the dissemination of short narrative texts, which are almost always copied with other material, and frequently in diverse contexts that do not always meet the expectations of the modern reader.⁵ The research project ‘The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript’ took a cross-European approach to the dissemination of the highly mobile short verse narrative in Middle Dutch, Middle English, Old French and Middle High German multi-text codices.⁶ Within this project, the research methodologies ranged from focusing on the manuscript contexts of a single text (the *Chastelaine de Vergi*) or a single author (the Dutch author known as Augustijnken) to the analysis of ‘user profiles’ and the potential social functions of a book (the Liber Rubeus Bathoniae, Longleat House, MS 55). These individual projects fed into more general observations on the factors that might influence compilation, including the

³ In roughly chronological order, some of the most pioneering studies include: Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), and *The Romance of the Rose and Its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Pamela Gehrke, *Saints and Scribes: Medieval Hagiography in Its Manuscript Context* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Stephen G. Nichols and Siegfried Wenzel, eds, *The Whole Book: Cultural Perspectives on the Medieval Miscellany*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996); Keith Busby, ‘*Fabliaux* and the New Codicology’, in *The World and Its Rival: Essays on Literary Imagination in Honor of Per Nykrog*, ed. by Kathryn Karczewska and Tom Conley (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), pp. 137-60, and *Codex and Context* (2002). More recent collaborative studies include *Mouvances et jointures. Du manuscrit au texte médiéval*, ed. by Milena Mikhailova, *Medievalia*, 55, (Orléans: Paradigme, 2005), a special issue of the *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 83.3 (2005) edited by Keith Busby. Two current collaborative research projects investigate different aspects of the written transmission of Francophone texts: Olivier Collet, Francis Gingras and Richard Trachsler, ‘Lire en contexte à l’époque prémoderne. Enquête sur les manuscrits de fabliaux’ (2011-2013); and Simon Gaunt, Bill Burgwinkle and Jane Gilbert, ‘Medieval Francophone Literary Culture Outside France’ (MFLCOF) (2011-2014) <<http://www.medievalfrancophone.ac.uk>> [accessed 13 September 2014].

⁴ In particular, *Mouvances et jointures*; and Olivier Collet and Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, eds, *Le Recueil au Moyen Âge: Le Moyen Âge central, Texte, Codex & Contexte VIII* (Turnholt: Brepols, 2010).

⁵ By contrast, other short text types appear in less ‘generically’ diverse contexts: lyrics were frequently anthologised in *chansonnières*; and similarly, pious narratives, miracles and hagiographic works were also often compiled in primarily homogeneous contexts.

⁶ ‘The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript: Text Collections from a European Perspective’ (2010-2013) <<http://www.dynamicsofthemedievalmanuscript.eu>> [accessed 13 September 2014].

length of texts, authorship, shared subject matter, and texts of local interest, as well as material aspects of organisation which might influence reception, such as tables of contents, rubrics, and types of initials. By taking a comparative and multilingual approach, the project considered these phenomena across linguistic boundaries (whether shaped by geography or academic discipline). The current study is an output of this project and takes as its starting point ‘pre-existing’ collections of short verse narratives (henceforth referred to as ‘story collections’). These composite works are frequently found in multi-text codices alongside independent short verse narratives.

In comparison with the other linguistic corpora, the Golden Age for the dissemination of short verse narratives in francophone multi-text codices is relatively precocious.⁷ The ‘Hypercodex’ project, undertaken by a team of researchers at the University of Geneva, identified the period from the thirteenth to the first quarter of the fourteenth century as the most prolific for the production of large multi-text manuscripts containing literary texts in Old French.⁸ Their corpus was formed of manuscripts with a minimum of twenty-five texts of varied content and length. Moreover, it was limited to *recueils organiques* (which embody or are closer to the original medieval act of *mise en recueil*) as opposed to *recueils factices* or *composites* (composite manuscripts formed of discrete codicological units).

Within their corpus of ‘organic’ multi-text codices, story collections play an important role:

la présence récurrente de collections littéraires au sein de nos manuscrits-recueils nous paraît de nature à retenir l’attention. Les formes dites “à tiroir” comme le *Roman de Sept Sages de Rome* (ms. BnF, f. fr. 1553 et Bern,

⁷ The diversity of this early corpus distinguishes it from the later author collections of short verse narratives in French, such as those by Guillaume de Machaut, which became more frequently collected in ‘anthologies’ from the mid-fourteenth century. See Huot, *From Song to Book*. Whilst the German corpus of *Mären* had the greatest longevity (from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries), both the Dutch and English corpora primarily date from the fourteenth century onwards.

⁸ Waguih Azzam, Olivier Collet and Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, ‘Hypercodex’, <<http://www.unige.ch/lettres/mela/recherche/hypercodex/>> [accessed 12 September 2014].

Burgerbibliothek, 354), le *Chastoient d'un pere à son fils* (ms. BnF, f. fr. 19152), *Barlaam et Josaphat* (ms. BnF, f. fr. 1553) et d'autres ensembles de fables ou de poèmes connaissent dans nos manuscrits une fréquence d'apparition que nous avons souvent signalée en évoquant la valeur de modèle que ces textes pourraient avoir pour la dynamique de mise en recueil.⁹

As 'models' of *mise en recueil*, their composition is shown to influence the organisation of other material in the codex. This comes to the fore in their analysis of Paris, BnF, f. fr. 19152, a large thirteenth-century compilation that includes a significant number of short items as well as three romances.¹⁰ The codex begins with the *Chastoient d'un père à son fils* (fols 1ra-15ra), one of two French verse translations of Petrus Alfonsi's *Disciplina clericalis* (see chapter 1). In fr. 19152, the *Chastoient* is subdivided so that its individual tales are each introduced by a rubric and pen-flourished initial. These paratextual markers are similar to those that precede each of the independent short items at the centre of the codex, suggesting 'une analogie entre le *Chastoient*, qui se présente à nous comme une collection préétablie, et le groupe de textes qui forme la partie centrale de notre codex.'¹¹ This similarity works at the level of content also. The mix of edification and entertainment in the *Chastoient* is paralleled by the juxtaposition of comic items, such as *fabliaux*, with more didactic co-texts. Furthermore, the subtle thematic links that 'structure' the *Chastoient*, 'par association libre', are compared to the transitions between topics in fr. 19152. The story collection is thus shown to occupy 'une position stratégique' within the codex.¹² Whilst the 'Hypercodex' researchers emphasise that multi-text codices do not share the ideological coherence of a literary work, in the case of fr. 19152, the arrangement of the codex recalls the 'type d'organisation proposée par le *Chastoient* et sa source

⁹ Azzam, Collet and Foehr-Janssens, 'Mise en recueil et fonctionnalités de l'écrit', in *Le Recueil au Moyen Âge*, pp. 11-34, p. 33.

¹⁰ See 'Analyse du manuscrit Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, f. fr. 19152 (anc. Saint-Germain, 1830; 1239)', which was formerly available at the web address <<http://129.194.19.127>>.

Unfortunately, this website is no longer live. See Appendix 3: Table 3.3 for a link to the online digitisation of this codex.

¹¹ 'Analyse', p. 4.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

latine'.¹³ The story collection is posited as an important model and matrix for manuscript compilation: 'La dynamique du corpus de fables enchâssées exalte la capacité qu'a l'écriture d'offrir de manière accrue des possibilités d'arrangement et de réarrangement, de classification et d'organisation du savoir.'¹⁴

The potential 'strategic position' and presentation of story collections is also perceptible on a cross-European level. For example, the Middle High German *Barlaam und Josephat* repeatedly occurs in compilations with groups of short narratives, notably 'beispiel' by Der Striker.¹⁵ In the monumental Middle English codex, the Vernon Manuscript (Oxford, Bodl., MS Eng. poet. a. 1), different groupings of short narratives are found at the beginning of the codex and their presence is believed to play a central role in the structure of the volume.¹⁶ Likewise, the presentation of the Middle English *Seven Sages of Rome* within multi-text manuscripts has been shown to problematise its 'multi-textuality' and to encourage the reception of its embedded tales as independent short narratives.¹⁷ The interplay between the story collection and the dissemination of independent short verse narratives is thus pertinent beyond the francophone sphere.

Despite their noteworthy presence, there has not yet been a systematic investigation of the dissemination of story collections in francophone multi-text codices. Whilst individual studies have focused on the copying of collective works in

¹³ 'Analyse', p. 7.

¹⁴ Azzam, Collet and Foehr-Janssens, 'Mise en recueil', p. 33.

¹⁵ For example, the thirteenth-century codex Munich, MS cgm 16 and the fourteenth-century Vienna, Cod. Vind. 2884.

¹⁶ Wendy Scase discussed the influential role of the *South English Legendary*, *Miracles of the Virgin*, *Northern Homily Cycle* and *Estoire del Evangelie* in the production of the codex in her paper 'Short Verse Narratives in the Vernon Manuscript' presented at the 'Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript' Final Conference, Utrecht (25-28 April 2014). See also, 'Rubrics, Opening Numbering, and the Vernon Table of Contents', in *The Making of the Vernon Manuscript: The Production and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. a. 1*, ed. by Wendy Scase, Texts and Transitions, 6 (Turnholt: Brepols, 2013), pp. 97-126.

¹⁷ Emily Runde, 'Sages *In Situ*: Representations of Reception in the *Seven Sages of Rome* and its Medieval English Manuscripts', unpublished paper presented at the 'Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript' Final Conference, Utrecht (25-28 April 2014).

a single codex (e.g. Paris, BnF, f. fr. 24301)¹⁸ or the manuscripts of a single body of work (e.g. Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles Nostre Dame* and Herman de Valenciennes' *Bible*),¹⁹ no comparative analysis of the written dissemination of works formed of short narratives has been undertaken. Building on the findings of the 'Hypercodex' researchers, this thesis takes the 'recueil dans le recueil' as its starting point to further our understanding of the transmission of these works in multi-text codices, of the relationship of story collections to the dissemination of independent short verse narratives, and to investigate the extent to which the malleability of the so-called 'collection préétablie' could be deemed influential in the process of compilation. I will focus on how the textual and paratextual arrangement of the codex affects the reception of the story collection, and also, how the presentation and organisation of the story collection affects the way its co-texts are read. In order to gain a broader understanding of their written dissemination and compilation, this investigation will consider the manuscripts of three different francophone story collections in verse: the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, a French verse translation of the *Disciplina clericalis* (distinct from the *Chastoiment*); a widely disseminated thirteenth-century collection of pious tales, known as the *Vie des Pères*; and lastly, the innovative twelfth-century fable collection, the *Ysopet*, attributed to the author known as Marie de France.²⁰ Before

¹⁸ See Milena Mikhaïlova-Makarius, 'Le Bien dire du manuscrit BnF fr. 24301. Recueils et fleurs de rhétorique', in *Le Recueil au Moyen Âge. Le Moyen Âge central*, ed. by Olivier Collet and Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, *Texte, Codex & Contexte VIII* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), pp. 63-90. This chapter is extracted from her comprehensive study of the collected works of Robert de Blois in fr. 24301, *L'École du roman: Robert de Blois dans le manuscrit BnF fr. 24301* (Paris: Champion, 2010).

¹⁹ See Kathy M. Krause and Alison Stones, eds, *Gautier de Coinci: Miracles, Music, and Manuscripts* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006); Maureen Boulton, 'La Bible d'Herman de Valenciennes: Texte inconstant, texte perméable', in *Mouvances et jointures*, pp. 85-96.

²⁰ The *Fables Pierre Aufons* is the title allocated by the most recent editors of the work to distinguish it from the second independent French verse redaction, the *Chastoiment*; see Yasmina Foehr-Janssens et al., *Étude et édition des traductions françaises médiévales de la 'Disciplina Clericalis' de Pierre Alphonse* (Université de Genève, 2006) <<http://www.unige.ch/lettres/mela/recherche/disciplina.html>> [accessed 14 September 2014]. Previously, both redactions were referred to as the *Chastoiment d'un père à son fils*. In order to avoid any confusion with the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, I will be referring to the fable collection attributed to Marie de France as the *Ysopet*. Throughout the thesis, the title found in the edition cited will be used unless otherwise stated.

progressing any further, I will first identify the characteristics specific to the ‘story collection’.

i. ‘Story Collections’: Frameworks for Narratives

A ‘story collection’ is here being defined as a series of discrete narratives that were habitually transmitted together as a collection and which are likely to have been conceived by their author as a collection. ‘Story collection’ is therefore not being used as a ‘generic’ label (as is often the case for ‘frame narrative’), but to describe the accumulation of narrative units in a single composition. In this light, the term is applicable to a large range of works from geographically and chronologically different literary traditions: Aesopic fables, Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, the ancient Indian *Panchatantra*, *The Thousand and One Nights*, and the lives of the Desert Fathers and Desert Mothers in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*.²¹ In some of these works, the collected tales are recounted by characters within an overriding story, which might traditionally be described as a ‘frame narrative’. In other examples, the tales are more simply juxtaposed rather than enclosed or encased in a visible manner. In order to explore and acknowledge these divergences and their effects, the term ‘framework’ as opposed to ‘frame’ will be used to describe the structuring of story collections. This will nuance the analysis of the types and degrees of hermeneutic control that shape the reception of their individual tales, and the modes of reading encouraged

²¹ In the canon of medieval French literature, there are examples of story collections and individual narratives that stem from these diverse anterior traditions. See Frederic C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (Helsinki: Suomalainen tiedeakatemia, 1981). A number of the most popular medieval tales occur within the three story collections under investigation, including the legend of the Widow of Ephesus (no. 5262), retold in the *Ysopet* (*De vidua* (XXV)), and the tale of half-friend (no. 2216), which is the first narrative of the *Disciplina clericalis* (and its French verse translations) and also features in the *Vie des Pères* (*Demi-ami* (39)).

(continuous/discontinuous). Framework is also being used to allow for the malleability of the medieval story collection, as experienced in writing.²²

The most explicit frameworks of story collections take the form of a longer narrative, which fictionalises the narration of the tales. An example of this type of story collection in the corpus of medieval French literature is the Christianised legend of Buddha, *Barlaam et Josaphat*, in which the parables play a role in the conversion of the young pagan, Josaphat. Similarly, in the various redactions of the *Roman des Sept Sages de Rome*, the inserted tales influence the outcome of the longer narrative.²³ In this instance, they have a judicial function: they are told during the trial of the young prince who has been accused of seducing his father's new wife. In both *Barlaam* and the *Sept Sages*, the plot of the fictional framework comes to a conclusion; the narrative threads are tied together. Yet, within these textual traditions there are potential variations, which can affect the order or content of the tales. For example in *Dolopathos*, a distinct reworking of the *Sept Sages* tradition, the tales are only told by the seven wise men, with the addition of Virgil.²⁴ This contrasts with other versions in which the seven wise men each respond to a tale told by the queen, and the prince tells the final story. Therefore, the narrativity of the framework does not necessarily stabilise the contents of the story collection. Nonetheless, the very presence of the plot incites a linear reading experience.

By contrast, the reading experience of story collections without narrative frameworks is more likely to be discontinuous and selective. Marie-Louise Ollier offers a definition of the dynamics of this type of story collection in an article on the

²² By malleability, I am referring to the multiple textual configurations of story collections (see the discussion of *mouvance* below) and the varied forms of paratextual division used to demarcate the parts and the whole, as will be discussed in detail in each of the three chapters.

²³ On the different Old French redactions of the *Sept Sages*, see Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, *Le Temps des fables: 'Le Roman des Sept Sages', ou l'autre voie du roman* (Paris: Champion, 1994).

²⁴ *Dolopathos* is a French verse translation of Johannes de Alta Silva's Latin work of the same name. Herbert, *Le roman de Dolopathos. Édition du manuscrit H 436 de la Bibliothèque de l'École de médecine de Montpellier*, ed. by Jean-Luc Leclanche, 3 vols (Paris: Champion, 1997).

‘forme’ of the *Lais* attributed to Marie de France.²⁵ For Ollier, the fable collection attributed to the same author, the *Ysopet*, is an example of a category that also includes collections of *sententiae*, *exempla*, and proverbs. The individual parts of these collections are independent but not autonomous; they relate to each other in terms of their exemplarity, but exist as discrete, self-contained units, a potentially extensible pool of heterogeneous resources. Rather than being controlled by a strict literary design or order, this type of collection is characterised by openness and uniform variety. The *Lais*, however, occupy an intermediary position according to Ollier: the individual narratives all deal with the same subject (love), representing ‘un savoir’ that is understood through their complementarity.²⁶ Moreover, it is the ‘aventure’, rather than any appended moral, that reveals the teaching of the *lai*.²⁷ Ollier offers a suggestive analysis of the complex network of narratives found in the *Lais*. However, her definition of the category of collection associated with the *Ysopet* requires further nuancing. Ollier could pay more attention to analysing how the identity of these collections is established through acts of framing. In the case of the *Ysopet*, the morals that occur at the end of each fable consolidate the idea of the collection. Indeed, the framework of the story collection is elucidated through the iterative nature of these extradiegetic passages. Furthermore, the prologue and epilogue that recount the narrative of its composition generate a sense of the distinctive identity of this first vernacular fable collection as well as delineate its boundaries.²⁸

In contrast to Ollier, Karla Mallette recognises in the fable collection a ‘remedial form of framing’:

²⁵ Marie-Louise Ollier, ‘Les *Lais* de Marie de France ou le recueil comme forme’, in *La Nouvelle: Formation, codification et rayonnement d’un genre médiéval, Actes du Colloque international de Montréal (McGill University, 14-16 octobre 1982)* ed. by M. Picone, Giuseppe Di Stefano and P. D. Stewart (Montreal: Plato Academic Press, 1983), pp. 64-79, p. 71.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 71.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 75.

²⁸ However, the epilogue (in which the author names herself) and, to a lesser extent, the prologue are not present in every copy (see chapter 3).

One could argue that a remedial form of framing was present in the European traditions – in sermon literature, for instance, or in Aesop’s Fables: serial collections of stories knitted together by a sense of hermeneutic purpose. Indeed, the more avowedly didactic collections – *Barlaam and Josaphat* and *Kalila and Dimna* in particular – do seem similar in narrative construction to the countless versions of the *Fables* of Aesop in the European languages made during the Middle Ages. The frame itself is relatively anodyne. The audience is in need of instruction and these tales will teach: this, in essence, summarizes the centrifugal force generated by the framing narrative in these collections.²⁹

By comparing fable collections with more narrative but ‘avowedly didactic collections’, she highlights the implicit framework established by their overriding ‘hermeneutic purpose’. This is contrasted with works such as the *Seven Sages of Rome*, in which ‘the frame provides a diffracted hermeneutic lens, allowing for a number of competing interpretations, in particular when tales are told for a motive which seems to skew the narrator’s stated moral’.³⁰ By focusing on the nature of the hermeneutic control, she engages in a broader assessment of story collections and the varied nature of their framing.

Between the narrative and iterative frameworks I have identified, sits the *Disciplina clericalis*. Mallette suggests that the *Disciplina* follows the same ‘framing philosophy’ as the fable collections, ‘using a simple didactic frame to bind together embedded narratives’.³¹ By contrast, other scholars consider this influential Latin work alongside more narrative story collections such as the *Sept Sages*.³² In fact the *Disciplina* recalls elements associated with both types, and the dynamics of its framework are more complex than Mallette argues. The work is formed of a series of wise men, often in dialogue with a student or son, who articulate aphorisms and

²⁹ Karla Mallette, ‘The Hazards of Narration: Frame-Tale Technologies and the “Oriental Tale”’, in *Oxford Handbook to Chaucer*, ed. Suzanne Conklin Akbari (forthcoming), <https://www.academia.edu/4247777/The_Hazards_of_Narration_Frame-Tale_Technologies_and_the_Oriental_Tale> [accessed 13 September 2014], pp. 10-11.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 11.

³¹ Ibid., p. 10, note 4.

³² For example, Yasmina Foehr-Janssens and Marion Uhlig, eds, *D’Orient en Occident. Les recueils de fables enchâssées avant les ‘Mille et une Nuits’ de Galland* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014). Unfortunately, this collection of essays was not in circulation before the completion of this thesis.

fables on the tenets of wisdom.³³ There is not always, however, a clear differentiation between the extradiegetic interlocutors, the cited *auctores*, and the protagonists, such as in the first narrative, which centres on an encounter between a father and son (*De dimidio amico*).³⁴ At the same time, whilst lacking the narrative cohesion of works like the *Sept Sages*, the pedagogic exchange fictionalises the impulse to narrate: tales are frequently told in response to the son's/student's requests, and the figure of the apprentice even has the opportunity to recount his own examples in the second half of the work (tales XVIIIa and XX). The progression of the *Disciplina* is to a certain extent linear. Following teachings on friendship, women and *inter alia* table manners, the final series of tales contemplate death and the afterlife, forming an appropriate closure to the 'education'.

The thematic progression of the *Disciplina* has a discernible effect on the written dissemination of the story collection, which is remarkably stable despite the large corpus of manuscripts.³⁵ The linearity of the extradiegetic framework could thus be seen to moderate the story collection's written transmission. The two thirteenth-century French verse translations of the *Disciplina*, the *Chastoiement* and the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, largely retain the same linear progression as their Latin source. However, the *Fables* do not include the final series of tales, ending in most witnesses with tale XXXI and a unique epilogue (see Appendix 1: Table 1.1).³⁶ By contrast, the copies of the *Chastoiement* are relatively more consistent in content. The absence of the *Disciplina*'s ending results in the greater degree of instability in the final section of the *Fables*. The textual transmission of story collections is thus intimately tied to the

³³ In the majority of cases, an Arab father is portrayed in dialogue with his son. On the range of interlocutors, see pp. 35-36.

³⁴ For a list of the *Disciplina*'s tales, see Appendix 1: Table 1.1.

³⁵ See chapter 1, especially 1.1, pp. 36-37.

³⁶ The instability of the ending of the *Fables Pierre Aufons* is discussed in 1.1.3.

form and content of their frameworks. Indeed, the specific nature of their *mouvance* will be shown to influence their dissemination and compilation in multi-text codices.

ii. Medieval Vernacular Story Collections and *Mouvance*

Paul Zumthor coined the term *mouvance* to describe the mobility of medieval texts.³⁷

The *œuvre* ('fondamentalement mouvante') is experienced through its extant witnesses, its 'états du texte'. Whereas Zumthor engages with oral forms of transmission as well as their interaction with written modes, Bernard Cerquiglini's later coinage *variance* is specifically grounded in the written dissemination of medieval texts, and he critiques in particular the philological tradition of textual editing. In *Éloge de la variante*, Cerquiglini presents *variance* as a fundamental characteristic of the 'atelier de l'écriture' represented by medieval literature.³⁸ He underlines the productive role of the scribe and the inherent openness of the medieval text: 'Toujours ouverte, et comme inachevée, l'œuvre copiée à la main, manipulée, est l'appel à l'invention, à la glose, au commentaire'.³⁹ Divergences in the content of the tales or their hermeneutic framing (morals, dialogue, etc.) are widespread in the written transmission of vernacular story collections. However, evidence of design that moderates the written transmission of the story is also perceivable. Within medieval texts, anxiety is expressed about the potential changes made by future 'editors'. In the epilogue of the *Ysopet* (see chapter 3) and within the extradiegetic dialogue of the *Fables Pierre Aufons* (see below), the works reflect on how their content might be appropriated and intentions altered.⁴⁰ As Zumthor underlines, later

³⁷ Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), pp. 84-96.

³⁸ Bernard Cerquiglini, *Éloge de la variante. Histoire critique de la philologie* (Paris: Seuil, 1989), p. 57.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 58.

⁴⁰ A similar fear of the potential loss of 'authorial' control is echoed by Geoffrey Chaucer in a warning to his scribe Adam. See 'Chaucers words unto Adam, his owne sciveyn', in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by Larry D. Benson, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 650.

medieval authors such as Guillaume de Machaut or Charles d'Orléans make a concerted effort to control and to fix the written transmission of their texts.⁴¹ However, even before this period there is evidence of degrees of fixity. For this reason, I will appropriate and elaborate on Zumthor's *mouvance* to illustrate how the framework of the vernacular story collection affects its written transmission.

Whilst totally different in terms of their scale, function and reception, lyric poems offer a fruitful starting point for considering the mobility of the story collection. Indeed, it is possible to parallel the arrangement of the composite parts of the lyric (its stanzas) with the structuring of narratives in a story collection. Zumthor highlights how despite the fluctuation of stanzas in different *chansonniers* (at the same time as the content of these stanzas remains relatively stable), the variation in their order is not purely the result of chance: in most cases the first stanza and *envoi* retain their introductory and closing positions.⁴² Amelia Van Vleck develops this further, underlining how the formal features of the lyric are manipulated either to resist or to encourage their future innovation.⁴³ A modern example of deliberate *mouvance* is Raymond Queneau's *Cent mille milliards de poèmes*.⁴⁴ Whilst his sonnets are structured by a fixed rhyme scheme, the physical form of the book allows the reader to select and generate poems, destabilising the notion of the 'authorial' version. However, there remains a tension between the collection's openness and its finite limits of creation.

As for the story collection, it is the nature of the framework (as opposed to the 'formal' characteristics of the lyric) that influences the transmission of the work. In the case of the three twelfth- and thirteenth-century story collections under investigation in this thesis, the differences between their frameworks affect the

⁴¹ *Essai*, p. 93.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁴³ *Memory and Recreation in Troubadour Lyric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

⁴⁴ Raymond Queneau, *Cent mille milliards de poèmes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1961).

degree of *mouvance*. The most ‘narrative’ of the three selected story collections is the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, which, as indicated above, is an intermediate form. It is also arguably the most stable.⁴⁵ The cumulative nature of the education and the progression of dialogue thus regulate to a certain extent the arrangement of the tales and structure of the story collection. As for the *Vie des Pères*, it has the most extensible framework and is the least stable in terms of its textual tradition (see Appendix 2: Table 2.2). In this collection of pious tales, each narrative is framed by a sermonising prologue and epilogue. There is no sense of linear progression and the collection is essentially open-ended. The effects of this essential extensibility are reflected in the ‘continuations’ of the *Vie des Pères* and the numerous ‘interpolations’.⁴⁶ It is possible to identify stable series of tales.⁴⁷ However, the iterative nature of the framework ultimately allows for multiple permutations and combinations. The only consistent element is the first tale, which includes a general introduction to the story collection.⁴⁸ The *Ysopet* attributed to Marie sits between the *Fables Pierre Aufons* and the *Vie des Pères* in terms of its extradiegetic framework. Like the *Vie des Pères*, the framework is iterative: each fable is self-contained and concluded by a moral. Yet, the collection’s prologue and epilogue instate another level of framing and provide the narrative of the work’s origins and composition. However, the presence of this master framework is not consistent.⁴⁹ In the absence

⁴⁵ Yet, as noted, it has higher degrees of variation in arrangement than the copies of the *Chastoiement*.

⁴⁶ On the ‘continuations’ and ‘interpolations’, see 2.1.2.

⁴⁷ For example, the tales of the ‘condensed’ *Vie des Pères* found in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25439 appear in this order in a number of manuscripts, see 2.4.1.

⁴⁸ In six manuscripts of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, there is an epilogue, but it is unclear whether this is ‘authorial’ or a later attempt to impose closure on the collection. For more information, see my analysis of ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* in 2.1.1.

⁴⁹ For an overview of the presence of the prologue and epilogue in the manuscripts, see Appendix 3: Table 3.3.

of the prologue and epilogue, the *Ysopet* becomes anonymous and indistinct from other witnesses of the Aesopic tradition.⁵⁰

From the fourteenth century onwards, the conscious structuring of vernacular story collections becomes more common. Quantitative limitations are imposed on iterative story collections, such as *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* and Christine de Pizan's *Cent ballades*, which clearly delineate the integrity of the work. Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron* is a prime example of similar restrictions determining a narrative framework: its ten characters tell a different story every day over the course of ten days; and on each of those ten days, a different character chooses the theme for the day. Boccaccio thus regulates the structure of his work, limiting both the content and number of tales, and even adding his own authorial rubrics.⁵¹ However, there is evidence of the author's own modifications and revisions to the work, as well as the interventions of manuscript compilers.⁵² Thus whilst the 'authorial' frameworks suggest an attempt at imposing closure on their work's written transmission, authors such as Boccaccio, as well as scribes and compilers, continued to renew the work, adapting the material according to their own designs. In the pre-print era, the story collection is thus continually ripe for adaptation. Attempts to establish fixity are part of the fiction of its framework. It remains possible for even the story collections with quantitative limitations to be broken down and reshaped,

⁵⁰ Two later manuscripts of the *Ysopet*, which feature neither prologue nor epilogue, are analysed in section 3.4.2.

⁵¹ As found in the 'autograph manuscript', Berlin, Staatsbibliothek und Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS Hamilton 90.

⁵² See Amedeo Quondam et al., 'Giovanni Boccaccio' <<http://www.internetculturale.it/opencms/directories/ViaggiNelTesto/boccaccio/eng/index.html>> [accessed 14 September 2014] and in particular, 'I. In the author's scriptorium' <<http://www.internetculturale.it/opencms/directories/ViaggiNelTesto/boccaccio/eng/c.html>> [accessed 14 September 2014]. On the compilatory implications of the fragmentary copy found in Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magliabechiano II, II, 8, see K. P. Clarke, 'A Good Place for a Tale: Reading the *Decameron* 1358–1363', *Modern Language Notes*, 127 (2012): 65–84. See also Nicola Jones, who problematises the notion of the *Decameron*'s 'fixed' framework as part of her investigation into the acts of framing in story collections, 'Reading the Frame/Framing the Reader: The Negotiation of Narrative Authority in Medieval Italian Short Story Collections' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2008).

or for the narratives to escape and travel independently, with or without the evidence of their original framing.

Whilst acknowledging the divergences on the micro-level of the variant, this study is primarily concerned with illustrating how the global configurations of the story collections relate to their compilation in multi-text codices. As will be illustrated by the three corpora, the frameworks nuance the nature of the story collection's *mouvance*. This not only relates to the configurations of the story collection, but also influences the external mobility of these story collections in terms of their co-texts and organisation in manuscripts.

iii. Modes of Compilation and Organisation in Francophone Multi-Text Codices

Multi-text codices rarely share the ideological and methodological concerns of literary compositions or represent the design of a single 'author'. Sometimes it is not clear whether a manuscript represents a carefully contrived object or an accumulative collection of texts formed by pure chance. One might expect the regularity of the visual arrangement to reflect coherence at the level of content. Yet in cases where the presentation is highly systematic, the content does not always correspond to our expectations, such as Paris, BnF, f. fr. 837.⁵³ Indeed, *mise en page* may be a tool for lending superficial coherence to disparate material. At times, it is not clear which point of the continuum (from the intentional to the accidental) we are dealing with. Is the manuscript designed according to a particular stylistic programme or is its presentation specified by convention (the unengaged replication of stylistic norms)?

⁵³ In *Mouvances et jointures*, Waguih Azzam, Olivier Collet, Yasmina Foehr-Janssens and Sylvie Lefèvre attempt to identify potential loci of meaning in this fascinating codex.

To what extent do the characteristics of the codex reflect practical or intellectual concerns?

Such questions regarding the nature of the object underlie the debate surrounding the terms ‘anthology’ and ‘miscellany’ in Anglophone criticism. The implications of these labels are brought to the fore in the collection of essays compiled in *The Whole Book*. Siegfried Wenzel uses ‘miscellany’ to refer to a manuscript of mixed content without necessarily broaching the question of intentionality.⁵⁴ Conversely, Julia Boffey defines the term as the random incorporation and accumulation of texts, and differentiates it from ‘anthology’, which denotes items brought together according to a given principle of organisation.⁵⁵ In a different vein, E. Ann Matter argues that a ‘miscellany’ may have an intention that was previously overlooked.⁵⁶ In the field of Old French studies, Keith Busby rejects the application of the term ‘miscellany’ to describe francophone ‘recueils’ such as those studied by the ‘Hypercodex’ project (for example Paris, BnF, f. fr. 837, fr. 19152, and fr. 1553).⁵⁷ For Busby, ‘miscellany’ designates the unplanned and haphazard, as opposed to the more neutral connotation of heterogeneous content. In order to avoid any misconceptions regarding the nature of the codices under investigation, I am using the term ‘multi-text codex’ to refer to any manuscript that includes multiple works. This term does not presume or imply order or disorder, and aims to convey an empirical fact. However, it is not unproblematic. The boundaries

⁵⁴ ‘Sermon Collections and Their Taxonomy’, in *The Whole Book*, pp. 7-21.

⁵⁵ Boffey goes on to acknowledge the possibility that manuscripts might be the result of both planning and the random acquisition of texts. See ‘Short Texts in Manuscript Anthologies: The Minor Poems of John Lydgate in Two Fifteenth-Century Collections’, in *The Whole Book*, pp. 69-82.

⁵⁶ ‘A Carolingian Schoolbook? The Manuscript Tradition of Alcuin’s *De fide* and Related Treatises’, in *The Whole Book*, pp. 145-52.

⁵⁷ Keith Busby has expressed this opinion at a number of conferences I have attended over the last three years.

and definition of a single text can fluctuate.⁵⁸ Indeed, story collections pose particular problems: independently circulating texts are inserted into their boundaries; at the same time, tales from story collections are copied in isolation.⁵⁹ The unique properties of each medieval book thus require a certain amount of terminological flexibility.

Whether or not the codex represents a cohesively compiled object, its production is implicitly influenced by medieval theories of *compilatio* and *ordinatio*. In his insightful study, Malcolm Parkes highlights the role of these Latin concepts in the evolution of the medieval book.⁶⁰ In the thirteenth century, compilation was an important scholastic and clerical literary activity and an array of encyclopaedias and similar works emerged in Old French.⁶¹ This same period witnesses the flourishing production of large francophone multi-text codices. Yet, as Ardis Butterfield rightly underlines, ‘a codex rarely conforms straightforwardly to a notion of controlled, purposive compilation’.⁶² Moreover, the principles of organisation that may subtend the production of a manuscript are not necessarily discernible. At the same time, notions of *compilatio* and *ordinatio* influence both the content and presentation of vernacular manuscripts. Whilst not always applied with the same consistency or to the same degree, the processes of arranging, selecting, excerpting, and editing underlie the compilation of seemingly disparate material in a multi-text codex. Whether intentional or not, (re-)contextualisation has implications for reception. Likewise, the implementation of paratextual features, from initials and rubrics to

⁵⁸ For example, three stanzas from *Miserere* by the Renclus de Molliens appear as a single discrete piece in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 837 (f. 203ra-vb). Both the extracted units in fr. 837 and the longer versions of *Miserere* could be counted as a/the ‘text’.

⁵⁹ This is especially pertinent to the dissemination of collections of pious tales and miracles. The close interaction of narratives from the *Vie des Pères* and Gautier de Coinci’s *Miracles Nostre Dame* make the definition of what constitutes a multi-text codex problematic. See chapter 2, especially p. 106.

⁶⁰ Malcolm B. Parkes, ‘The Influence of the Concepts of *Ordinatio* and *Compilatio* on the Development of the Book’, in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. by J. J. G. Alexander and M. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 113-41.

⁶¹ See Alastair Minnis, ‘Late-Medieval Discussions of *Compilatio* and the Role of the *Compiler*’, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 101 (1979): 385-421.

⁶² Ardis Butterfield, ‘Epilogue’, in *Le Recueil au Moyen Âge*, pp. 269-75, p. 270.

tables of contents and numbering, guides the reader of the codex. In addition, the role and construction of the author is of particular interest in the production and reception of francophone multi-text codices. From its earliest usage as robbery and plagiarising, the Latin vocabulary of *compilatio* raises questions and concerns regarding the status of authorship (who is responsible for what?).⁶³ The following sub-sections address these three aspects of manuscript compilation, which roughly correspond to the principal focus of each chapter in this thesis.

- **(Re-)Contextualisation**

Within the extradiegetic dialogue of the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, the father expresses anxiety about the potential *written* retransmission of his stories. Before educating his son on the wiles of women, he articulates concerns that relate both to the loss of hermeneutic control and how context shapes meaning:

Fiz, plusors choses te contasse
 De lor engien, si je osasse;
 Mais je vei ben que tu veuz metre
 Tout quant que je te di en letre,
 Si orra teus par aventure
 Mes paroles en t'escripture
 Qui tot a mal atornera
 Ce que solement dit sera
 Por home estruire et doctriener
 Et por saveir sei mieuz garder.
 Si ira el, quer teus orra
 L'engien que l'autres fet avra,
 Qui mauvais essample i prendra
 Et autretel ressaiera. (ll. 1149-62)⁶⁴

His apprehension does not relate to the content of the tales *per se*, but rather to not being able to control their reception. By contrast, in the same passage in the *Disciplina*, the 'Magister' fears the blame that might be directed towards him because

⁶³ See Neil Hathaway, 'Compilatio: From Plagiarism to Compiling', *Viator*, 20 (1989): 19-44. Whilst in modern English compilation as 'plagiarism' is not referred to in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, in modern French this connotation remains.

⁶⁴ *Petri Alfonsi Disciplina Clericalis*, III. *Französische Versbearbeitungen*, ed. by Alfons Hilka and Werner Söderhjelm, Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae, 46 (Helsinki, 1922).

of their risqué nature, as opposed to the negative effects of the tales on the potential future audience. The idea of their retransmission in the *Fables Pierre Aufons* specifically relates to the dynamics of reading and writing. Alongside communication and the desire to record information, recontextualisation is classified by the 'Hypercodex' researchers as the third 'function' of writing: 'la mise à distance du contexte immédiat de la communication qui démultiplie les possibilités de prise en compte du message.' Under the effects of this third function, they see reading as 'un processus aussi fécond d'investissement du sens'.⁶⁵ Recontextualisation thus becomes a way of creating and reading the text anew. The passage from the *Fables Pierre Aufons* adumbrates the varied nature of the compilation of this story collection in manuscripts and the different reading experiences incited by its co-texts. The different contexts destabilise and multiply its reception.⁶⁶

Whilst in most cases multi-text codices lack global cohesion, the local arrangement of items can suggest and elicit particular readings through their similarities or differences. Busby's work on sequences of texts in manuscripts of romances and *fabliaux* has played an influential role in illustrating how context shapes meaning.⁶⁷ As Butterfield eloquently affirms, '[to] compile is to comment and transform one work into another, to make generic leaps and cross authorial boundaries'.⁶⁸ These 'generic leaps', however, often raise questions regarding modern definitions of medieval genres. This is especially pertinent in relation to the much-debated genre of the *fabliaux*. According to the editors of the *NRCF*, *fabliaux* are

⁶⁵ Azzam, Collet and Foehr-Janssens, 'Mise en recueil', p. 32.

⁶⁶ Studies of the manuscript contexts of a single text have become popular in recent years: Salvador Rubio Real and Richard Trachsler, 'Le Profil du recueil: observations sur le contexte manuscrit des *Quinze Signes du Jugement dernier*', *Babel*, 16 (2007): 101-22; Keith Busby, 'Le Contexte manuscrit du *Songe d'Enfer* de Raoul de Houdenc', in *Le Recueil au Moyen Âge*, pp. 47-61; Bart Besamusca, 'The Manuscript Contexts of Short Tales: The Example of the Middle Dutch *Chastelaine de Vergi*', in *Cultures courtoises en mouvement*, ed. by Isabelle Arseneau and Francis Gingras (Montreal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2011), pp. 249-61; and Rachel Sweet's forthcoming thesis on the manuscript contexts of the Old French *Chastelaine de Vergi*.

⁶⁷ See 'Fabliaux and the New Codicology', and *Codex and Context*, pp. 405-84.

⁶⁸ Butterfield, 'Epilogue', p. 276.

compiled with all three story collections under investigation in this thesis. Tales from the story collections and narratives classified as *fabliaux* share the same verse form (octosyllabic rhyming couplets), have settings in common, and combine secular and religious protagonists. Per Nykrog includes tales from the *Fables Pierre Anfon*s and the *Ysopet* in his study of the *fabliaux*.⁶⁹ Indeed, narratives from the *Ysopet* and the insular redaction of the *Disciplina*, the *Chastoiment*, are even compiled as *fabliaux* in an edition of the Anglo-Norman witnesses of the genre.⁷⁰ As for the *Vie des Pères*, the tales have been described as ‘counter-*fabliaux*’, on account of their inversion of the trajectory of the comic tale.⁷¹ In all three corpora, there are examples of the matrix of the story collection encouraging direct interplay with *fabliaux*, and in some cases, they are even incorporated into the framework of the story collection. Their co-presence both problematises the purpose of the comic narrative and symbiotically affects the didactic agenda of the story collection. My intention is not to engage in the debate of the *fabliau*’s definition, but rather to explore the interplay between these independent short verse narratives and the story collections, in terms of their function and reception. This interplay is further encouraged by the paratextual presentation of the codex.

- **Paratext**

The paratextual features of a medieval book play an essential role in the organisation of its texts, and hence affect their reception. By paratext, I am referring to rubrics (headings/captions in red ink and titles more generally) and explicits, as well as *mise*

⁶⁹ *Les Fabliaux*, rev. edn (Geneva: Droz, 1973), see especially pp. 60-66, 144-46, and 251-55.

⁷⁰ *Eighteen Anglo-Norman Fabliaux*, ed. by Ian Short and Roy Pearcy (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2000).

⁷¹ This term was coined by Brian Levy; for more information on its implications see chapter 2, especially 2.3.

en page, including the number and spacing of columns, the frequency and types of initials, and illustrations.⁷² Moreover, the introduction of navigational tools such as tables of contents and systems of numbering become a more common feature of vernacular codices from the fourteenth century onwards.⁷³ In the same manner as the frameworks of story collections, these paratextual features exert a layer of hermeneutic control on the material compiled and can make disparate items appear unified. Their implementation has the effect of constructing or dissolving textual boundaries, and also creating hierarchies within and between items. They can represent both the compiler's interpretation of the content as well as shape the reader's response to the material. Again, Busby has been a key forerunner in demonstrating how the paratextual features of a codex manipulate the reader and how rubrics and illustrations can reflect the medieval reception of a text.⁷⁴ In relation to the *Vie des Pères* and the *Ysopet* attributed to Marie, he highlights how the component parts are marked and stratified in their manuscripts.⁷⁵ This study aims to build on his work by looking not only at how *inter alia* rubrics and initials relate to the broader codicological context, but also how the *mouvance* of the story collection affects its paratextual presentation.

The implications of the paratextual presentation are most striking in the manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères*. The malleability of the textual tradition of the *Vie des Pères* is mirrored in the varied paratextual configurations of its tales. Indeed, the varied textual and paratextual configurations frequently involve the integration of other material into the matrix of the story collection. In other cases, tales from the *Vie des Pères* are incorporated into new compilations. One of the most intriguing

⁷² The terminology adopted in this thesis is mostly based on Denis Muzerelle's *Vocabulaire codicologique*. A multilingual version is available online <<http://vocabulaire.irht.cnrs.fr/vocab.htm>> (Edition hypertextuelle, Version 1.1, 2002-2003) [accessed 16 September 2014].

⁷³ Parkes, p. 133.

⁷⁴ See chapters 3 and 4 in *Codex and Context*.

⁷⁵ *Codex and Context*, pp. 195-216.

examples of tales being extracted from the *Vie des Pères* and re-compiled is the fourteenth-century codex, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 12483, known as the *Rosarius*.⁷⁶ The work is divided into two ‘livres’, each formed of fifty ‘chapitres’.⁷⁷ The individual ‘chapitres’ are formed of a description of a ‘thing’ and its moralised description, a short narrative (miracle or hagiographic piece) and a devotional prayer or song. The material that makes up these units is predominantly borrowed from the work of other authors, *inter alia* Jean de Meun, Rutebeuf, Huon le Roi de Cambrai, a small fragment by Gautier de Coinci, as well as seven tales from the *Vie des Pères*. *Miserere* (7) (fols 94ra-95rb) from the *Vie des Pères* forms the concluding element of the fiftieth and final chapter of the first book. Rather than the principal narrative component, it supplements another miracle. This tale about the simple man who incorrectly recites ‘Miserere mei, deus’ thus fulfils the function of the prayer or song.⁷⁸ Extracted from the *Vie des Pères*, it is re-compiled and appropriated. Subsumed into the global textual framework of the *Rosarius*, the diverse components are further integrated through the consistent use of initials, numbering and table(s) of contents. The paratextual presentation thus reinforces the act of compilation. It is unclear whether it is *the* autograph copy, but the manuscript is likely to have been created close to the time of the compilation of the *Rosarius*.⁷⁹ Either way, this exceptional codex represents *compilatio* as both a physical object and an ideological whole.

⁷⁶ See Arthur Långfors, ‘Notice du manuscrit français 12483 de la Bibliothèque nationale’, *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale et autres bibliothèques*, 39 (1916): 503-663; and also Marie-Laure Savoye, ‘Semis, transplantation et greffe: les techniques de la compilation dans le *Rosarius*’, in *Le Recueil au Moyen Âge*, pp. 199-221.

⁷⁷ Owing to a lacuna at the start of the codex, there is no table of contents for the first book, but there is one for the second, in which descriptions of the contents accompany roman numerals for the ‘chapitres’.

⁷⁸ The compiler includes the prologue, but the narrative is largely condensed and culminates in an alternative and shorter epilogue to the one found in other copies.

⁷⁹ Savoye, p. 217.

- **Authorship**

In the extreme case of compilation that is the *Rosarius*, the works of known authors are assimilated into the design of the compiler. By contrast, in fr. 837, one of the appropriated authors, Rutebeuf, is elevated to a principle of organisation.⁸⁰ Indeed, this is one example of the emerging prominence of authorship in continental francophone multi-text codices produced at the end of the thirteenth century. The attribution of authorship is especially significant in the case of short verse narratives, which are more commonly transmitted anonymously.⁸¹ Authorship does not otherwise play a role in the arrangement of fr. 837. By contrast, the thirty-one items by Rutebeuf, which include a range of short verse narratives, are framed by the attribution of his authorship. They are introduced by the *only* original introductory paratext in the codex: ‘Ci *commencent* li dit rustebuef’ (fol. 283vb).⁸² The scribe then marks the end of Rutebeuf’s corpus with ‘Expliciunt tuit li dit rustebuef’ (fol. 332va), closing the framework of his authorship. The presence of this author collection within fr. 837 lends authority to the corpus of works by Rutebeuf and creates a locus of cohesion in the midst of this heterogeneous multi-text codex.⁸³

A similar example of an author collection of short verse narratives occurs in another thirteenth-century multi-text codex, Paris, Ars., MS 3142. However, in this manuscript, authorship plays a more global role in the organisation and presentation of the codex. Fifteen items by Baudouin de Condé appear in succession (fols 300va

⁸⁰ Indeed, of the three codices with significant components of Rutebeuf’s corpus, fr. 837 is the only one in which ‘the identity of the author was elevated to an organizational principle’. See *From Song to Book*, pp. 213-19 (p. 219).

⁸¹ For a cross-European examination of the different forms of author attributions and their functions in multi-text codices containing short verse narratives, see the collaborative article produced by members of the ‘Dynamics’ project, Bart Besamusca, et al., ‘Author Attributions in Medieval Text Collections: An Exploration’ (forthcoming). Material from the two francophone case studies will be briefly summarised below.

⁸² All individual items were originally only identified in the explicits, but in the fourteenth century, a reader added titles at the beginning also.

⁸³ Waguih Azzam regards Rutebeuf’s author collection in fr. 837 as a way of engaging with the heterogeneity of the codex as a whole, see ‘Un recueil dans le recueil: Rutebeuf dans le manuscrit BnF f. fr. 837’ in *Mouvances et jointures*, pp. 193-201.

to 320ra), and are framed by a similar rubric to the one found at the start of Rutebeuf's works in fr. 837: 'Ci comencent li dit baudouin de conde' (fol. 300va). In addition, the historiated initial that precedes the first text by Baudouin features a portrait of the author, in a private exchange with the Virgin. In contrast to fr. 837, authorship plays a prominent role in the compilation of this codex, which unusually is formed almost entirely of attributed works, including the *Ysopet* attributed to Marie.⁸⁴ This codex is one of the few to depict the female author, and includes two portraits that will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3 (3.3.2). The function of author attributions, both within the text and in the paratext, and their relationship to the construction of an authority will play a key role in the analysis of the *Ysopet* manuscripts.

iv. Reading Medieval Manuscripts

Medieval manuscripts demand multiple (and flexible) modes of reading. In this thesis, the approach towards reading manuscripts is threefold. First, as already implied, this study examines how acts of reading are represented on/through the medieval book, considering manuscript compilation (or rearrangement) as an act of reading and creation, as well as the residues of reception left by contemporary readers on the page. Secondly, this investigation explores how the physical and textual characteristics of the medieval codex suggest ways for reading its texts, whether foregrounding a particular interpretation, or a specific mode of reading (continuous/discontinuous, selective). In addition, I also explore the ideal reader

⁸⁴ The series of short verse narratives by Baudouin recalls the presentation of composite works in the codex such as the *Ysopet*, and suggests the potential influence of iterative and attributed story collections, such as the *Ysopet*, on the compilation of author collections of short verse narratives.

projected by the book.⁸⁵ Finally, on a metadiscursive level, this thesis engages with what is at stake when we as literary scholars read and interpret the medieval book.

The evidence of reception in compilation and the reading experience elicited by a codex are intimately associated, reinforcing and revealing a set of horizons of expectation.⁸⁶ The arrangement and presentation of material in a multi-text codex can reflect an act of reading on the part of the manuscript's makers or compilers. In the case of the highly codified *Rosarius* codex, the reader is brought 'into the time of interpretation, the moment when a compiler chooses to make a connection or to realize a cross-reference visually.'⁸⁷ Whilst each codex is unique and needs to be appreciated in terms of its singularity, the textual and physical features of the book can exhibit conventions of manufacture. Consistent standards of production are particularly evident in manuscripts made in professional workshops or religious institutions. Domestic codices, produced by amateur compilers at a distance from the main centres of production, may reflect more anomalous codicological features, but at the same time they may attempt to replicate the characteristics of professionally produced codices. Certain physical features may indicate types of content. For example, large blue and red puzzle initials are commonly used at the beginning of each tale of the *Vie des Pères* and at the beginning of each miracle in Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles Nostre Dame*. Sometimes the codex might play with the horizons of expectation for particular types of material through its presentation, other times it might consolidate them. The breadth of the manuscript corpus in this study makes it possible to differentiate the anomalous/exceptional from the more conventional.

⁸⁵ For example, see my reading of Paris, BnF, f. fr. 12581 (1.2).

⁸⁶ They unite 'de manière complexe les effets de lecture et des stratégies de programmation d'une réception à venir'. See Waguih Azzam, Olivier Collet and Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, 'Les Manuscrits littéraires français: pour une sémiotique du recueil médiéval', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 83.3 (2005): 639-69, p. 664.

⁸⁷ Butterfield, 'Epilogue', p. 277.

The literal reader's residue adds another layer of reception to the medieval book. Their imprints can range from annotations and marginal drawings to the numbering of texts and the creation of tables of contents. John Dagenais compares the marks left by the reader on the codex to the interaction between audience and performer during an oral performance:

In the same way a manuscript is a dialogue which may take place across centuries: marginal and interlinear comments, emendations, glosses. [...] No one would deny, I believe, the role of the audience in shaping an individual oral performance. In the same way, these 'audience responses' in the margins modify the manuscript performance significantly.⁸⁸

Yet, this requires some modification. Rather than a dialogue, which implies a two-way exchange, the reader's responses are dialogic, contributing to the voices already underlying the act of compilation.

Medieval acts of re-compilation, re-ordering and re-assemblage represent some of the most intriguing forms of reader response. By incorporating composite codices formed of discrete codicological units bound together during the Middle Ages, this study broadens the scope of the 'Hypercodex' project, which focused on 'organic' manuscripts alone. Whilst composite manuscripts do not preserve the 'original' state of the codex, they represent equally productive medieval objects for consideration that can be just as deliberately (re-)compiled as an 'organic' codex (for example Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Château, MS 475, see 2.3.2). Indeed, these composite codices can bear witness to and encourage new interpretations of and interactions between texts.

In addition to engaging with the layers of reading embedded in the codex, this study self-reflexively considers how we as literary scholars read the medieval book. How do we accommodate our methodologies to the singularity of the

⁸⁸ John Dagenais, 'That Bothersome Residue: Toward a Theory of the Physical Text', in *Vox Intexta: Orality and Textuality in the Middle Ages*, ed. by A. N. Doane and Carol Braun Pasternak (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), pp. 246-59, p. 256.

medieval manuscript? In her ‘Epilogue’ to *Le Recueil au Moyen Âge*, Butterfield brings to the fore the researcher’s desire for a manuscript that represents an act of careful compilation. These idealised objects are almost non-existent. In the same collection, Richard Trachsler criticises the knee-jerk response of literary critics to project ‘coherence’ and thematic unity onto the unruly manuscripts before them.⁸⁹ They both offer an important reminder of the need to place the physical object at the starting point of our deliberations. However, even when sticking to the empirical facts, we are at risk of foregrounding certain aspects at the expense of others. It is easy to distort the nature of the object. At times, it is impossible to differentiate the (conceivably) planned from the (potentially) random. Yet, as cultural productions, medieval books invite us to interpret and speculate on their meanings, to add our response to the chain of reactions.

v. Outline of this Thesis

In this thesis, the chapters stand alone as investigations into the written transmission of three different story collections, while also informing one another in terms of their comparative findings and methods of investigation. Rather than reify the three works, this study embraces the *mouvance* of their textual traditions, beginning in each case with the story collection as it is found in manuscripts. It is grounded in an extensive survey of the manuscript corpora, which makes it possible to highlight aspects that are unique to the dissemination of a specific story collection or type of manuscript production. The primary research questions addressed in each chapter are: to what extent can the malleable textuality of the story collection be considered a vehicle for the generation of multi-text codices? How are the boundaries of the story

⁸⁹ See ‘Observations sur les “recueils de fabliaux”’, in *Le Recueil au Moyen Âge*, pp. 35-46.

collection and its co-texts mediated by the paratext? What are the effects of the paratextual presentation on the reading experience of the codex? How might the hermeneutic framework of the story collection influence the reception of its co-texts? And how is the story collection reframed by its co-texts?

The three story collections have been selected on the basis of their verse form, their wide-ranging narratives, the nature of their extradiegetic frameworks, and their interaction with independent short verse narratives in a variety of medieval francophone multi-text codices. More narrative story collections such as the *Sept Sages* have not been included in this study because they do not display the same degree of interaction with independent short verse narratives. The three corpora under investigation are ordered chronologically according to the relative periodisation of the manuscript corpora, beginning with the story collection that has the shortest period of dissemination in multi-text codices and concluding with the one with the greatest longevity.

The first chapter examines the five extant codices of *Fables Pierre Aufons*, the smallest corpus under investigation. All of the codices date from the thirteenth to early fourteenth century and therefore are representatives of the Golden Age of large, literary multi-text codices. Yet, they are strikingly different in terms of their physical and textual properties. The immediate co-texts of the story collection deal with topics ranging from love to death and the afterlife, in both comic and serious registers. The relationship between pleasure and profit so fundamental to the *Fables Pierre Aufons* is thus realigned in each codex. By approaching the manuscripts from the perspective of their contents, I reveal how the dynamic approach to reading and the dialogue framework of the *Fables Pierre Aufons* play a role in the variety of its contexts. By contrast, the degree of *mouvance* is the least in the three corpora. The

Disciplina's influence on the configurations of the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, however, results in some intriguing attempts to restore its contents.

In the second chapter, the large corpus of *Vie des Pères* manuscripts is approached according to the configurations of the story collection. It begins with the codices that contain significant portions of the *Vie des Pères*, moving on to those in which its boundaries are dissolved, and finally, the shorter series and isolated tales in circulation. This story collection is the most mobile and extensible as well as the most widely disseminated. However, it is the least varied in terms of the range of co-texts. The material therefore elicits a more codicologically-based analysis, looking at the different configurations of the *Vie des Pères*, their paratextual presentation, and how this affects the interaction of the tales with other material in the manuscript. What do these trends reveal? Moreover, is there evidence of diachronic developments? As the focus of the thesis is manuscript compilation, the corpus is limited to the manuscripts that transmit the *Vie des Pères* with a minimum of five additional items.

The final chapter concerns the manuscripts of the *Ysopet* attributed to Marie de France. The primary focus of this chapter is the question of authorship. It develops the approaches of the previous two chapters by considering both the contents of the co-texts, and the different configurations of the fable collection, particularly in relation to the presentation of the female author. The fable genre is by nature associated with collection. Indeed, all twenty-six medieval manuscripts of the fable collection feature additional material.⁹⁰ The chapter is organised geographically and chronologically, beginning with the insular codices. They include some of the earliest witnesses of the tradition and display the greatest degree of *mouvance*, which is linked to the idiosyncratic role of booklets in England. This is followed by an analysis

⁹⁰ This does not include the fragment in Nottingham, UL, Mi Lm 6 and the post-medieval codices. See the list of manuscripts in Appendix 3: Table 3.3.

of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century continental codices that contain portraits of the author. Their varied modes of representation are linked to the broader textual and visual dynamics of the codex. The final section shifts to the fifteenth-century codices, which, on the one hand, reproduce earlier manuscript compilations or groups of texts, and, on the other, reflect the anonymisation of the *Ysopet*. The dissemination of this story collection demonstrates a tension between the status of its female author and the genre of the fable collection.

The principal approach to each chapter is primarily dictated by the nature of the manuscript corpus. Whilst demonstrating how different types of material can elicit specific methodologies, this thesis simultaneously highlights how the ways in which we approach our object of research, our hermeneutic frameworks, inevitably shape the nature of our results and findings.

Chapter 1

Reading Dialogue: The Manuscript Contexts of the *Fables Pierre Aufons*

Delez grant val grant mont,
Ce dist Salemons.
Delez grant cul grant con,
Marcoul li respont.¹

So concludes *Salomon et Marcoul*, the most widely disseminated Old French redaction of a dialogue that dates back to the ninth century. In older versions of the tradition, the figure of Solomon represents bookish wisdom whilst his less distinguished interlocutor embodies a more experiential and shrewd basis of knowledge which challenges his opponent's authority.² In this redaction, as the above quotation makes clear, Marcoul's puns on Solomon's maxims are unapologetically crude in content and tone. The incongruity of Marcoul's parodic 'counter-wisdom' primarily generates humour rather than undermining the wisdom of his learned opponent.³ It therefore seems incongruous that these interlocutors known for their verbal sparring appear as two silent oxen in one of the narratives of the *Fables Pierre Aufons* (hereafter *FPA*).⁴

Yet within this thirteenth-century story collection, consisting of an instructive

¹ 'De Marco et de Salemons', in *Nouveau recueil de fabliaux et contes inédits, des poètes français des XIIe, XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles*, ed. by Dominique Martin Méon (Paris: Chasseriau, 1823), vol. 1, pp. 416-36, p. 436. Méon does not state his source but it is believed to be the copy in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25545. See Tony Hunt, 'Solomon and Marcolf', in *Por le soie amisté: Essays in Honor of Norris J. Lacy*, ed. by Keith Busby and Catherine M. Jones (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), pp. 199-224, p. 203.

² See John Mitchell Kemble, *The Dialogue of Salomon and Saturnus: With an Historical Introduction* (London: Aelfric Society, 1848), pp. 73-83. The absence of the Latin version's narrative context and narrative *exempla* has led to the belief that there is little connection between the *Dialogus Solomonis et Marcolfi* and the Old French versions, which include only the exchange of proverbs. For more recent scholarship on the history of the tradition, see Hunt, 'Solomon'.

³ By contrast, in the contemporary version found only in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 19152, Marcoul's responses to Solomon's wisdom offer 'a picture of contrasting social classes and value systems', Hunt, 'Solomon', p. 202. The version cited above is the most widely disseminated. Whilst varying in length and content, the numerous copies are 'united by the nature of Marcoul's contributions, which constitute a crudely misogynistic diatribe based on vilification of woman presented as "putain" or "pute"', Ibid., p. 204. Hunt also edits a third French redaction, from an early fourteenth-century English manuscript.

⁴ The title *Fables Pierre Aufons* was first suggested by Gaston Paris and has been adopted by the editors of the recent online edition. See Yasmina Foehr-Janssens et al., *Étude et édition des traductions françaises médiévales de la 'Disciplina Clericalis' de Pierre Alphonse* (Université de Genève, 2006) <<http://www.unige.ch/lettres/mela/recherche/disciplina.html>> [accessed 14 September 2014]. Unfortunately, due to the incompatibility of the software with more recent operating systems, I have not been able to make use of this edition.

dialogue between a father and his son, Solomon and Marcoul take on a symbolic role. Keith Busby characterises *Salomon et Marcoul* as ‘emblematic of the kind of tension between different modes of discourse (e.g., the serious and the comic) informing the corpus of Old French literature in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries’.⁵ Their presence in the *FPA* allusively and self-reflexively gestures towards the combination of ‘the serious and the comic’ and the underlying dialectical approach to knowledge in this story collection, and its Latin source, Petrus Alfonsi’s *Disciplina clericalis*.

The dialectical dialogue of Solomon and Marcoul offers a fruitful starting point for thinking about how their rival registers and wisdom play out in the copies and contexts of the *FPA*. The importance of dialogue as form and as content pervades the corpus. The five extant codices of the *FPA* represent a diverse group of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century multi-text codices. In this chapter, they are divided according to the type of content found with the *FPA*. In Paris, BnF, f. fr. 12581, the exchange of knowledge is foregrounded throughout the codex, and this is accentuated by the programme of illustrations. Yet, within this didactic compendium there is space given to the voice of *deduit*. In the following two manuscripts, the *FPA* are concluded with material on the afterlife. Whilst in the Augsburg codex this encourages a more devotional reading of the collection, the Pavia manuscript’s extended copy of the *FPA* is playfully framed by two comic tales that prolong the interplay between *engin* and *sens*. The final section of the chapter addresses the manuscripts in which the *FPA* are supplemented with teachings on love, a form of ‘wisdom’ absent from the story collection and its source. In London, BL, MS

⁵ Keith Busby, ‘Fabliaux and the New Codicology’, p. 154. The ‘tension’ between Solomon and Marcoul is paralleled in the diverse content of the large multi-text codices that transmit the Old French redactions, such as the renowned Paris, BnF, f. fr. 837 (fols 160va-63ra), fr. 25545 (fol. 1r-v), Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 354 (fols 36r-38r), and fr. 19152 (fol. 116ra-117rc), which contains the less bawdy exchange.

Additional 10289, the *FPA* are followed by the contrasting pairing of Robert de Blois' *Chanson d'Amors* and *Jouquet*, a *fabliau* about the miseducation of a naïve young groom. The final example, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 7517, offers perhaps the most intriguing manuscript witness. In this small-format codex, a unique 'sequel' appears immediately after the *FPA*, extending and imitating the father-son exchange to incorporate lessons and narratives on love and then chivalry. Before investigating the manuscripts in more detail, I will firstly examine the framework of the *FPA* and its relationship to the *Disciplina*.

1.1 The *Fables Pierre Aufons* as translation/transformation of the *Disciplina clericalis*

Composed in England early in the twelfth century, Petrus Alfonsi's *Disciplina clericalis* is one of the most influential works of the Middle Ages. Diversity characterises its content, sources and form (a combination of verse and prose). A converted Jew from Spain, Petrus Alfonsi is believed to have been a doctor at the court of Henry I. His multilingual and multicultural background is reflected in the sources and the figures he cites in the *Disciplina*.⁶ In the prologue, he describes his book as a compilation:

partim ex proverbiiis philosophorum et suis castigationibus, partim ex proverbiiis et castigationibus Arabicis et fabulis et versibus, partim ex animalium et volucrum similitudinibus.⁷
[partly from the sayings of wise men and their advice, partly from Arab proverbs, counsels, fables and poems, and partly from bird and animal comparisons.⁸]

⁶ For a study of his life and works, see John Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi and his Medieval Readers* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1993).

⁷ *Petri Alfonsi Disciplina Clericalis, I. Lateinischer Text*, ed. by Alfons Hilka and Werner Söderhjelm, Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae, 38 (Helsinki, 1911), p. 2 (hereafter *PADC*).

⁸ *The 'Disciplina Clericalis' of Petrus Alfonsi*, trans. and ed. by Eberhard Hermes, translated into English by P. R. Quarrie (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 104 (hereafter *DC*). I have replaced the

In order to assure the successful transmission of knowledge and wisdom, the components are brief and entertaining, to combat the infirmity of the human mind and its weakness for distraction. He identifies the work with a title that suggests the subject of the book and its intended audience: ‘Huic libello nomen iniungens et est nomen ex re: id est *Clericalis Disciplina*; reddit enim clericum disciplinatum.’ (*PADC*, p. 2) [this book, to which I have given the title, *Disciplina Clericalis*, a name that well describes the contents, for it renders the educated man well versed in knowledge.’ (*DC*, p. 104)] Yet this is not a ‘clerical education’ in the technical sense. The wisdom is pragmatic, tailored to facilitate life in the ‘society of one’s fellow men’.⁹

Nonetheless, this is not without a spiritual dimension. In the prologue it is characterised as ‘sanctae philosophae’ (*PADC*, p. 1); living well in this world is thus linked to understanding God better and reaching ‘ad regna caelorum’ (*PADC*, p. 1). Indeed, God is said to have compelled him to write the book ‘ad multorem utilitatem’ (*PADC*, p. 1). Thus, whilst of benefit to the trained cleric, this ‘holy philosophy’ is simultaneously advantageous to a wider readership. Following the prologue, the narrator’s voice recedes until the epilogue. The first teachings and narratives are articulated by anonymous ‘philosophers’ and ‘Arabs’ as well as named *auctores*, such as Socrates (*PADC*, p. 2) and ‘Balaam, qui lingua arabica vocatur Lucaman’ (*PADC*, p. 3). The framework then takes the form of a pedagogical exchange. Various labels are used to describe the master-student interlocutors, in a relatively loose and free flowing dialogue. However, the majority of the narratives are articulated by an ‘Arab’ father to his son.¹⁰

translator’s use of ‘similes’ with ‘comparisons’, as the Latin text does not specifically refer to the rhetorical device.

⁹ See Hermes, ‘The Author and His Times’, in *DC*, pp. 1-99 (pp. 31-32).

¹⁰ An Arab father is specifically indicated as the narrator of tales I, II, III (and its embedded tale, IV), V, VI, XVIIIb, XIX, XXIII, XXVI, XXIX and XXXII (which is immediately followed by XXXIII and XXXIV). The Arab’s son recounts tales XVIIIa and XX. The narrator of XXIV and XXX is described as ‘Alius’, following the previous Arab father. The other terms used to describe the

Thirty-four short narratives are framed within the pedagogical exchange alongside auctorial citations and proverbial wisdom.¹¹ As a ‘story collection’, the *Disciplina* offers a rich and heterogeneous mix of fictional contexts and characters, from merchants, poets, shepherds and kings, to talking animals, cheating wives, and Alexander the Great. Many of its tales were appropriated and put to diverse uses throughout the Middle Ages. On the one hand, they were incorporated and reworked into moral collections (of *exempla* or Aesopic fables); on the other hand, their enticing narratives appealed to the authors of works intended for entertainment such as the thirteenth-century *Novellino* and Boccaccio’s *Decameron*.¹² In light of the popularity of the *Disciplina* (and his other works), Alfonsi became known as much as *auctor* of moral *gravitas* as an author of short narratives.¹³

Whether primarily read as a moral work or a story collection, the *Disciplina* was repeatedly reconceived in the centuries that followed its original composition, gaining new functions according to the changing nature of its audiences. Later scribes, redactors and authors edited, selected, omitted, shortened and expanded the work, producing numerous *remaniements* and translations, as well as extracting and appropriating its parts. The textual tradition of the *Disciplina* reflects the same divergent modes of reception. Alongside the copies of the ‘complete’ work (which are subdivided into those with the ‘Ältere Textrezension’ and the ‘Jüngere Textrezension’), Hilka and Söderhjelm identify the ‘incomplete’ copies which include

interlocutors are ‘magister’ and ‘discipulus’ (IX, X, XI, XIIa and b, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII). ‘Alius’ is used after ‘Magister’ for XXII. A ‘philosophus’ is said to recount tales VII and VIII to his son; and ‘Alius philosophus’ introduces XXXI. There are also exchanges with a ‘sapiens’ and his son (XXI), and a ‘senex’ and a boy (XXVII). One tale is attributed to the writings of Plato (XXV), following a list of citations by philosophers that originate in a ‘magister’/‘discipulus’ exchange. Tale XXVIII is included after a series of citations of philosophers that follow an exchange between an Arab father and his son. For a list of narratives, see Appendix 1: Table 1.1.

¹¹ This number is based on Hilka and Söderhjelm’s division of the tales. Whilst the embedded tale IV is counted separately, in other instances embedded or juxtaposed tales are under the umbrella of one figure (for example, XIIa and XIIb, and XVIIIa and XVIIIb).

¹² On the various uses and adaptations of the *Disciplina*, see Tolan, pp. 132-58.

¹³ In Chaucer’s *Tale of Melibee*, Alfonsi is cited as an *auctor*: ‘And Piers Alphonse seith...’ (*The Riverside Chaucer*, p. 224). ‘Pierres d’Anfol’ is designated as the original source of the *fabliau*, the *Chevalier qui recovra l’amor de sa dame*. See Tolan, p. 138; and Nykrog, p. 35.

versions formed of both narratives and *sententiae*, and those uniquely containing either narratives or *sententiae*.¹⁴ Throughout the later period of its transmission, the work continued to be read as both a source of fictive material and a moral treatise. The longevity and breadth of the *Disciplina*'s circulation and influence throughout the Middle Ages demonstrate how it continued to inspire and capture the imagination of readers, who in turn assured its evolution and regeneration.¹⁵

1.1.1 *Chastoïement* and *Fables*: Responses to the *Disciplina* in French verse

In the thirteenth century, two independent redactors translated the *Disciplina* into French verse. The *FPA* (version A) are believed to predate the second redaction, the *Chastoïement d'un père à son fils* (version B).¹⁶ In addition, there is a fourteenth-century French prose translation, the *Discipline de Clergie*. Whereas the latter offers a near faithful rendition of the *Disciplina*, the two thirteenth-century verse redactions have been described as 'adaptations' on account of their transformative approach.¹⁷ Yet, this is not to say that they 'adapt' the *Disciplina* in the same way. Indeed, the titles used in the recent online edition highlight the differences in their approaches to the Latin hypotext.

The two independent French verse redactions broadly parallel the responses to the *Disciplina* as a didactic treatise on the one hand and story collection on the

¹⁴ See 'II. Das Verhältnis der Handschriften zum Original und zu einander', in *PADC*, pp. XV-XXIX. Yet, despite the number and distance between the manuscripts, the degree of *mouvance* is not that great. See Werner Söderhjelm, 'Bemerkungen zur Disciplina Clericalis und ihren französischen Bearbeitungen', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 12 (1910): 48-75, pp. 53-54.

¹⁵ Tolan, p. 157-58.

¹⁶ Before the recent online edition, they were formerly both referred to as the *Chastoïement d'un père à son fils*. The semblance of this title is found in one manuscript of the *Chastoïement*, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 19152: 'Ci commence le chastoïement que li peres enseigne a son filz' (fol. 1r). However, the designation shifts at the end of the work: 'Explicit l'enseignement du pere au filz' (fol. 15r).

¹⁷ 'Il s'agit d'adaptations plutôt que de traductions fidèles.' See Foehr-Janssens et al., *Étude et édition*, especially 'Va : Trois traductions distinctes' <<http://www.unige.ch/lettres/mela/recherche/disciplina/traductions/trois.html>> [accessed 14 September 2014].

other. Whilst both French verse redactions standardise the *Disciplina's* interlocutors as a father and son in one continuous exchange, the *Chastoiment* foregrounds the pedagogic function of the work and the redactor of the *FPA* develops its narrative elements.¹⁸ Indeed, despite reducing some of the didactic content and omitting a number of the tales, the *FPA* are over one thousand lines longer than the *Chastoiment*. The linguistic and cultural contexts in which the two redactions emerged could be seen to affect the nature of their transformations of the *Disciplina*. In both cases, the translation into French embraces more openly the lay reader, but not necessarily with the same intentions. Whereas the *FPA* are believed to have been produced on the Continent, the *Chastoiment* was composed in England in the Anglo-Norman dialect. After the loss of Normandy at the beginning of the thirteenth century, French retained a distinct cultural and social appeal in England and continued to be used by the aristocracy and acquired by members of the lesser nobility.¹⁹ To this extent it represented a learned language rather than a vernacular one. After the Fourth Lateran Council, there were a number of French works composed to teach the laity doctrinal instruction.²⁰ It is in this context that we must place the *Chastoiment*, whose didactic emphasis aligns it with other instructive works composed in England in this period. For example, Pierre d'Abernon's *Lumiere as Lais* is a comparable dialogue between a 'deciple' and 'mestre' that incorporates narrative *exempla*. The *Manuel des Pechiez* by William of Waddington also includes religious instruction (albeit not in a dialogue) and narrative *exempla*. The *Chastoiment* might

¹⁸ There is evidence of a similar impulse to 'standardise' the framing dialogue within the Latin tradition of the *Disciplina*: in the thirteenth-century manuscript Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 367, the 'Arab' narrator is named 'Marmosetus' and this name is highlighted throughout the rubrics. See Tolan, p. 133; and *PADC*, p. V.

¹⁹ See also Rolf Berndt, 'French and English in Thirteenth-Century England: An Investigation into the Linguistic Situation after the Loss of the Duchy of Normandy and other Continental Dominions', in *Aspekte der anglistischen Forschung in der DDR: Martin Lehnert zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by Heinrich Scheel (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1976), pp. 129-50, pp. 135-37.

²⁰ Ian Short, *Manual of Anglo-Norman* (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2007), p. 34. The English manuscripts of the *Ysopet* produced in this period underline the didactic nature of the French texts in circulation (see 3.2).

also be compared to courtesy books such as *Urbain le Courtois*. By contrast, the continental *FPA* reflect a keen interest in and engagement with the contemporary vernacular literary culture of northern France, as will be discussed in more detail below. In this light, the differences between the two French verse redactions of the *Disciplina* in broad terms reflect their distinctive contexts of production.

The prologues highlight the divergences between the two redactions and their different relationships to the *Disciplina*. The insular *Chastoiment* does not reveal any association with its source. The father-son dialogue and its function is established from the first couplet: ‘Li pere sun fiz chastiout / Sen e saveir li enseignout’ (ll. 1-2).²¹ This did not, however, mean that scribes and compilers failed to recognise the work of the famous Latin author, especially given that he is likely to have composed the *Disciplina* in England. In the trilingual English manuscript of the *Chastoiment*, Oxford, Bodl., MS Digby 86, the introductory rubric refers to Alfonsi and places him in the role of the father: ‘Ci comence le romaunz peres aunfour coment il aprist *et* chaustia sun cher fiz. belement’ (fol. 74v). This further underlines Alfonsi’s standing and association with the material. By contrast, in the *FPA*, Petrus Alfonsi is explicitly named as the source, using the renown of the author to authorise the work. The father-son interlocutors are not systematically established until after the introduction of the first narrative. In the *FPA*, the first tale is not *De dimidio amico* (I), but represents an innovation on the part of the redactor that epitomises his elaboration of the narrative content. One of the aphorisms Balaam recounts to his son in the opening paragraphs of the *Disciplina* is transformed into a narrative similar

²¹ *Petri Alfonsi Disciplina Clericalis*, III. *Französische Versbearbeitungen*, ed. by Alfons Hilka and Werner Söderhjelm, Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae, 46 (Helsinki, 1922), ‘Version B’ (hereafter *CHAS*).

to the famous animal fable known in Latin as ‘De cicada et formica’.²² In the Pavia manuscript, it is given the title ‘du formi *et* du criquet’ (fol. 19rb).

Whilst referring to his source, the redactor of the *FPA* tones down the religious posturing at the start of the *Disciplina*, in which Alfonsi presents himself as ‘servus Christi Ihesu’ (*PADC*, p. 1). Instead, the *FPA* begin with a focus on worldly values:

Qui veut henor el siecle aveir
Premerainement deit saveir
Que ne puet a henor venir
Qui ne se veut a bien tenir. (ll. 1-4)²³

The concept ‘henor el siecle’ is not presented as one of the benefits of reading the *Disciplina*. Yet, it has been argued that the introduction of this notion in the prologue is evidence of the redactor’s careful reading of honour in the *Disciplina*, which operates implicitly within the work and most evidently in the tales on true nobility.²⁴

Whilst this adeptly characterises the global concerns of the hypotext, it alters the horizon of expectation. The redactor does, however, retain the connection between worldly behaviour and heavenly reward. In the conflict between ‘mal et bien’ (*FPA*, l. 11), good needs to prevail in order for the individual to conquer ‘L’enor del ciel et de la terre’ (*FPA*, l. 24). The means by which this ‘dobles henors’ (*FPA*, l. 23) can be attained is ‘par grant saveir’ (*FPA*, l. 30). Knowledge and wisdom enable one to live better in this world and find salvation in the next. The social concept of honour is

²² This well-known fable is found in the *Romulus* and a number of related Old French *Ysopets*. See Busby, ‘Beast Epic, Fable, and *Fabliau*: Le Chastoiement d’un père à son fils’, in ‘Grant Risée?’ *The Medieval Comic Presence: Essays in Memory of Brian J. Levy*, ed. by Adrian P. Tudor (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), pp. 103-114, p. 105. This innovation by the redactor of the *FPA* is referred to in Appendix 1: Table 1.1 as 1bis A.

²³ *Petri Alfonsi Disciplina Clericalis*, III. *Französische Versbearbeitungen*, ed. by Alfons Hilka and Werner Söderhjelm, Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae, 46 (Helsinki, 1922), ‘Version A’, hereafter *FPA*.

²⁴ See Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, Hélène Bellon-Méguelle and Sophie Schaller Wu, ‘L’Honneur de la clergie dans les *Fables* de Pierre Alphonse: À propos d’une des traductions françaises de la *Disciplina clericalis*’, in *Courtly Literature and Clerical Culture: Selected Papers from the Tenth Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society*, ed. by Christoph Huber and Henrike Lähnemann (Tübingen: Attempto Verlag, 2002), pp. 149-60, pp. 155-56. They argue that the redactor of the *FPA* takes ‘clerical honour’ one step further, by transferring courtly values onto clerical figures, and thus making the *Disciplina*’s humanist lessons understandable through the contemporary literary idiolect. See my discussion on this in relation to nouv. acq. fr. 7517 below.

thus given a spiritual dimension. At the same time, the courtly vocabulary employed associates clerical wisdom with the attainment of honour, as opposed to chivalric prowess.²⁵

Following the anaphora of ‘sens’ (*FPA*, ll. 33-36) and its valorisation above transient worldly ‘avoirs’ (be they objects or people), the redactor justifies his chosen source:

Por ce que je vei et sai bien
Que avant sens ne passe rien,
Voil Pierres Aufors translater,
Et si me puis d’itant vanter
Que, se Deus me veut maintenir
Tant qu’a chief en puisse venir
Et del latin le romanz traire,
Nen est nus cui plus deie plaire.
Quer Aufors, que le livre fist,
De noz bons anceisors le prist,
Qui el grant sens se delituent,
Ne rien fors sens ne coveituent.
Por ce que plus s’i delitast,
Qu’il li sist ou qu’il li coitast,
I mist *dedui*z et beaus fableaus
De genz, de bestes et d’oiseaus;
Mes saciez qu’il n’i a *deduit*
Qui ne seit chargiez de buen fruit.’ (*FPA*, ll. 59-76, *my emphasis*)

Whilst echoing Alfonsi’s invocation to God to help him finish the book, other aspects of the *Disciplina*’s prologue are realigned according to the redactor’s agenda. The cited *auctores* are subsumed under the generic label ‘noz bons anceisors’ (*FPA*, l. 68), and this generic tone is adopted throughout the first section removing the presence of Arab wise men.²⁶ Yet, Arab protagonists and Eastern contexts are retained within the narratives, suggesting that their otherness is only appropriate in the fictive world rather than the pedagogic framework.²⁷ This process of

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ The only named figure in the *FPA* is ‘Socrates’ (l. 115); the rest become ‘Uns saives hom’ (ll. 95, 169), ‘Uns autres’ (ll. 101, 109) and so on. The consistent father-son interlocutors are also unidentified: ‘Uns saives hom dist a son fiz’ (l. 169).

²⁷ The Egyptian and his friend from Baghdad are retained in II (*De integro amico*). The Spanish protagonist of tale X (*De decem cofris*) and the two bourgeois and *vilain* in XIX (*De duobus burgensibus et rustico*) are depicted as Muslim pilgrims: ‘A Mech en vont a Mahomet’ (l. 3118). However, the Arab

naturalisation is also apparent in the list of compiled sources (see above), which is reduced to ‘deduiz et beaus fableaus’ (*FPA*, l. 73), omitting the castigations, proverbs and Arabic sources. This emphasis on the narrative and pleasurable content characterises the work primarily as a story collection all the while invoking the infamous comic genre that flourished in the thirteenth century, the *fabliau*.²⁸ The usage of the term ‘fableaus’ only reoccurs in the *FPA* in relation to the tales on cheating wives at the heart of the story collection, which suggests the particular significance of this term and deliberate usage in this context.²⁹

The *FPA*’s prologue reframes the *Disciplina*’s relationship of pleasure to profit. Alfonsi presents the entertaining elements as essential to the success of his edifying agenda; the pleasurable assures the retention of the profitable and soothes the potential *taedium*.³⁰ By contrast, the prologue of the *FPA* presents the profitable as inherently pleasurable. The ‘sens’ of ‘noz bons anceisors’ is intrinsically linked to their pleasure (‘se delitouent’, *FPA*, l. 69). The ‘deduiz et beaus fableaus’ (*FPA*, l. 73) are included for the increased delight of the readers (*FPA*, l. 71), offering a surplus of pleasure. Yet, the last couplet adds a disclaimer: each ‘deduit’ has the potential to be profitable (‘chargez de buen fruit’, *FPA*, l. 76). Rather than sweetening the pill, the pleasurable moments are intrinsically beneficial. This is a nuance that subverts the

father of the first tale (*De dimido amico*) is rendered simply ‘Uns saives hom’ (l. 219), in the same manner as the interlocutors before him.

²⁸ Marion Uhlig, ‘Le Dialogue père / fils dans la *Disciplina clericalis* de Pierre Alphonse et ses traductions françaises en vers’, in *Formes dialoguées dans la littérature exemplaire*, ed. by Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu (Champion: Paris, 2012), pp. 163-79, p. 174.

²⁹ Interestingly, in the *Chastoiment*, the first three tales on cheating wives (IX to XI) are defined as ‘Treis cuntes’ (*CHAS*, l. 1236), and are the only narratives referred to with this label. The narrator repeats this term in the introduction to the third tale (XI): ‘Un autre cunte li cunta’ (*CHAS*, l. 1168). The fourth tale on feminine adultery (XIII) is called ‘une merveille’ (*CHAS*, l. 1325). Thus, like the *FPA*, these tales appear to be distinguished ‘generically’ from the other narratives.

³⁰ See Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, ‘Un assemblage nouveau: les histoires sur la ruse des femmes dans la *Disciplina clericalis* de Pierre Alphonse’, in *La Circulation des nouvelles au Moyen Âge. Actes de la journée d’études (Université de Zurich, 24 janvier 2002)*, ed. by Luciano Rossi and Anne Darmstetter (Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2005), pp. 225-51. Uhlig highlights how the dialogue form of the *Disciplina* also plays a key role in combatting *taedium*. See ‘Le Dialogue’, pp. 166-68.

traditional idea that narrative *exempla* make lessons more appealing.³¹ In this light, the success of the didactic content is implicitly dependent upon the reader's capacity to interpret the latent 'buen fruit'. As a consequence, there is the possibility that the profitable significance of the narratives will go unnoticed. Concerns regarding the 'correct' interpretation of the narratives come to the fore in the exchange between the father and son that precedes the tales on cheating wives. Rather than emphasise the potential blame incurred by the storyteller for telling such tales (as in the *Disciplina*), the redactor of the *FPA* focuses on how future audiences might be negatively affected by the transmission and recontextualisation of the stories.³² Andreea Weisl-Shaw argues that 'the didactic voice appears certain of its own failure from the outset'.³³ Yet, rather than the redactor's expression of how 'exemplarity has broken down',³⁴ the focus on the reader demonstrates an awareness of the potential meanings that could be generated by each new contextualisation and the *scriptible* nature of the *Disciplina*, cultivated by Alfonsi. Whereas the *FPA* playfully engage with this *scriptibilité*, the *Chastoiement* suppresses it, rendering the didactic message decidedly univocal.

³¹ Amy Heneveld and Marion Uhlig, 'Pour une poétique de l'exemplum courtois', *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes*, 23 (2012): 21-27, p. 26.

³² Cited in the introduction, p. 19.

³³ 'The Strengthening of the Frame in the *Fables Pierre Aufors*', in *Adaptation: Studies in French and Francophone Culture*, ed. by Neil Archer and Andreea Weisl-Shaw (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012), pp. 41-51, p. 47.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

1.1.2 *Sens* in Dialogue: ‘Samin’ and ‘Marcuel’ in the *Fables Pierre Aufons*

The narrative in which we find ‘Samin’ and ‘Marcuel’ in the *FPA*, *De aratore et lupo indicioque vulpi* (XXIII), is emblematic of the redactor’s elaboration of the *Disciplina*’s narratives, and how the *FPA* differ from the *Chastoiment*. The basic plot of *De aratore et lupo indicioque vulpi* (XXIII) concerns a ploughman, who threatens to give his two misbehaving oxen to a wolf as punishment for their disobedience. A wolf overhears his words and demands the promised oxen. A fox then arrives on the scene and offers to arbitrate over their dispute. Taking each party to one side, he negotiates a bribe of two hens from the ploughman and claims to the wolf that the ploughman will give him a large cheese instead of the oxen. The wily fox then leads the wolf away and tricks him by claiming the reflection of the moon is the promised cheese, eventually trapping the wolf at the bottom of a well. The increased level of narrative detail and the addition of lively dialogue render the tale approximately twice as long in the *FPA*. Indeed, whilst the extradiegetic framework is less prominent than in the *Disciplina*, there is a significant elaboration of dialogue within the narratives. By contrast, the brevity and content of the *Disciplina* is closely replicated in the *Chastoiment*. In the former, the *rustico* states ‘Lupi vos comedant!’ (*PADC*, p. 32), which is simply rendered ‘Mangé vus est li lus!’ (*CHAS*, l. 2610). In the *FPA*, the characterisation is developed, as well as the elaboration of the ploughman’s angry curse:³⁵

Par mautalent et par grant ire
Les comença mout a maudire
Et Deu orer et a prier
Que maus lous les peüst mangier.
‘Samin,’ dist il, ‘et vos Marcuel,
Fait m’avez icest jor grant duel,
Et je vos ai a Ysengris,
Le compere Renart, pramis,
Et il vos ait, quer ma jornee

³⁵ The oxen are portrayed in a negative light physically (‘gras et rogné’, *FPA*, l. 3577) and temperamentally (‘Dous orgoillos’, *FPA*, l. 3581).

M'avez hui tote anientee.' (*FPA*, ll. 3583-3592)

The anonymous characters are given the names of famous figures familiar to the thirteenth-century audience of Old French literature. In addition to 'Samin' and 'Marcuel', the artful fox and unfortunate wolf are recast as the instantly recognisable adversaries Renart and Ysengrin from the *Roman de Renart*.³⁶

This is not the only instance in which the wily Renart is incorporated into the *FPA*: he also appears in *De mulo et vulpe* (IV) and *De homine et serpente* (V). In each of these tales he acts as a mediator or judge. In IV, the embedded 'fable' (*FPA*, l. 806) cited by the king in *De tribus versificatoribus* (III), the fox tries unsuccessfully to get a mule to reveal his parentage. In V, 'Mesire Renart le gopil' (*FPA*, l. 927) arrives on the scene after a snake attacks the man who saved him. In order to make his 'judgement' (*FPA*, l. 932) on the snake's behaviour, he tells the latter to return to his original position as he cannot adjudicate based on what has been said, but needs to see what happened with his own eyes. Convinced that he behaved according to his 'nature', the snake is certain that he is right and thus unwittingly accepts the fox's instruction to return to the trap. The man is then told by the fox to walk away, leaving the snake incarcerated. In both these narratives, the minimal dialogue of the *Disciplina* is elaborated into lengthy and lively exchanges in which the fox demonstrates his wily *engin*. Returning to XXIII, we see how Renart's status as arbitrator comes to fruition. When he arrives on the scene, he is presented as knowing 'les leis del pais, / Les costumes, les jugemenz / Et toz les establissemenz' (*FPA*, ll. 3626-28). He even claims 'Et je ai esté a escole, / Et a Boloigne et a Paris' (*FPA*, ll. 3644-45), invoking two key centres of learning familiar to the continental audience. When he takes the ploughman to one side, Renart promises that he will

³⁶ The version of XXIII found in the *Disciplina* is regarded as a potential source for two separate branches of the *Roman de Renart* (branch IV, *Renart et Isengrin dans le puits*; and branch IX, *Renart et Liétart*). See John Flinn, *Le Roman de Renart dans la littérature française et dans les littératures étrangères au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1963), pp. 486-88.

succeed ‘Par mon engien et par mon art’ (*FPA*, l. 3667), emphasising his combination of natural guile and training. These are not empty words, for Renart cleverly fools Ysengrin at the well, which has two buckets hanging from a pulley. Despite his initial cautious request that Renart retrieve the ‘cheese’ on his behalf, the wolf’s greed blinds him and he steps into the second bucket, falling to the bottom of the well and releasing his supposed ‘compere’. This closing scene recalls the proverb that Renart cites at the end of V: ‘N’aveies tu lut l’escripture / Que bien deoit chaier le torment / Sor celui qui pendu despent?’ (*FPA*, ll. 954-56). This echo, originating in the *Disciplina*, highlights Alfonsi’s intricate and allusive interweaving of themes and teachings across the work.³⁷

Alongside Renart and Ysengrin in XXIII, the ploughman’s oxen are given the rather less predictable names of ‘Samin’ and ‘Marcuel’.³⁸ The silence of the oxen in tale XXIII appears paradoxical given their namesakes’ reputation for verbal sparring. Yet, whilst they do not speak, the invocation of this additional pair of adversaries draws attention to the structural function of doubles in the collection, and the competing voices and models of wisdom within the *FPA* as a whole. Eberhard Hermes contends that everything in the *Disciplina* is two-sided: ‘[the] “dialectical” treatment of a theme is a component basic consideration of the *Disciplina clericalis* [sic] and at the same time an expression of the author’s critical approach to knowledge.’³⁹ In this light, the redactor’s seemingly gratuitous incorporation of ‘Samin’ and ‘Marcuel’ suggests a parallel reading of the *Disciplina* and his own engagement in the interplay between *clergie* and *engin*. Both the *Disciplina*

³⁷ ‘Nonne legisti quod qui pendulum solverit, super illum ruina erit?’ (*PADC*, p. 12) [‘[Have you not read that] the weight falls on [the one] who has removed the bearings from it’ (*DC*, p. 116)].

³⁸ The editors of the online edition use this tale as an example to illustrate the independence of the two French verse redactions. Whilst highlighting the introduction of Renart, they do not comment on the implications of the other contemporary adversaries. See ‘Va: 3 traductions distinctes’, *Étude et édition*.

³⁹ See Hermes ed., pp. 28-35 (p. 31). Yet this operates unobtrusively, in a loosely associative manner: ‘[I]ndividual motifs are always being taken up again, and contrasted with one another in a dialectical manner’, p. 31.

and the *FPA* foreground the acquisition of wisdom and philosophy, and at the same time, space is given to the exuberant natural guile associated with women and Marcoulfian counter-figures such as Renart or Nedui the tailor (XX). The avatars of Solomon act for the good of the community, such as the philosophers in *De decem tonellis olei* (XVI) and *De aureo serpente* (XVII) who stand up for the disenfranchised and chastise the immoral behaviour of the persecutors. Renart could be seen to help the ploughman in XXIII, but his motivations are self-serving and his ‘judgement’ involves deception and ambiguity.

The modes of rival wisdom associated with Solomon and Marcoul are discussed in the *Disciplina*’s section on ‘De sapientia’, which forms part of the series of teachings after *De integro amico* (II). A philosopher states: ‘Sapiencie due sunt species: una naturalis, alia artificialis; quarum una non potest manere sine alia.’ (*PADC*, p. 7) [‘There are two sorts of wisdom, one a man is born with, the other he gains through learning and experience. Neither of these, however, can exist without the other.’ (*DC*, p. 110)].⁴⁰ This theme comes to the fore in the dialogue after the counter-example of a woman using her intelligence for good in *De decem cofris* (XV), following the series on cheating wives. In the *Disciplina*, impressed by the ‘ingenium’ of the wise old woman, the disciple believes no philosopher could have done better. The master responds stating that the philosopher unites ‘naturali ingenio et artificiali’, whereas the woman benefited only from ‘naturali ingenio’ (*PADC*, p. 22). The added benefit of philosophical training is presented as superior to relying only on one’s natural intelligence, but, at the same time, the two are characterised as interdependent. In the *FPA*, the son praises the good use of the woman’s ‘engien’

⁴⁰ An equivalent teaching is not found in the same section in the *FPA* or *Chastoiement*. In the latter, the emphasis is placed on ‘sen e saveir’ (*CHAS*, l. 658), but there is no acknowledgement of other types of intelligence.

and states that there is no philosopher ‘Qui plus soutiment engignast’ (*FPA*, l. 2487), to which the father responds:

Beaus fiz, li philosophe sont
Por la clergie que il ont
Plus engignos naturelment
Que ne puent estre autre gent. (*FPA*, ll. 2489-92)

The symbiotic relationship between *clergie* and *engin* thus echoes the *Disciplina*, and problematises the distinction between the women/counter-figures and the philosophers. By contrast, after tale XV in the *Chastoiment*, there is a strict division between the *clergie* of the philosopher and the natural guile of the woman. She succeeded ‘par nature’ (*CHAS*, l. 1835), but the philosopher would achieve the same goal ‘par sutileté e par art’ (*CHAS*, l. 1838). The natural intelligence of the woman and the learning of the philosopher are opposed and presented as discrete. The quashing of unrefined wisdom is symptomatic of the more prescriptive approach to knowledge and its acquisition in the *Chastoiment*. The tales voiced by the pupil or the son in the *Disciplina* are instead recounted by the father in the *Chastoiment*, rendering the transfer of knowledge markedly one-way and hierarchical. This simplifies the complex and multi-layered nature of the wisdom put forth in the *Disciplina*. Rather than an authoritarian manual of ‘clerical education’, the *Disciplina* represents a subtle art of living, in which the different narratives and lessons are inextricably entwined, from the tales containing the wily fox, discussed above, to the little bird’s warning against credulity in *De rustico et avicula* (XXII). The *FPA* offers a more zesty and fecund response to the humanist wisdom of the *Disciplina* than the prescriptive *Chastoiment*. The redactor exploits the generative interplay between *clergie* and *engin*, between the wisdom of scholarly refinement and innate guile, between solemnity and exuberance.

In addition to emblematising the *Disciplina*'s dialectical and 'critical approach to knowledge', the silent union of 'Samin' and 'Marcuel' in the *FPA* also can be read in relation to the work's contrasting registers. The tone ranges from the solemn to the burlesque; 'serious' teachings are juxtaposed with 'comic' scenarios. Like Marcoul's responses, the portrayal of this counter-wisdom has humorous effects. Whilst the son is warned against replicating the behaviour of those who fall victim to Renart and his allies, we simultaneously laugh at the downfall of those duped by their *engin*. These moments of light relief are already present in the *Disciplina* and further cultivated in the *FPA*.

1.1.3 *Mouvance* and Closure in the *Fables Pierre Aufons*

The ending of the *FPA* marks the most notable divergence from the *Disciplina* (and *Chastoiment*) and demonstrates the greatest degree of *mouvance* in the manuscripts (see Appendix 1: Table 1.1). The final tale in four of the five copies of the *FPA* is *De opilione et mangone* (XXXI), preceded by *De Maimundo servo* (XXVII) and *De latrone qui nimia eligere studui* (XXX). The collection therefore omits *De Socrate et rege* (XXVIII), *De prudentis consiliari regis filio* (XXIX) and the philosophers and hermit found in the final three tales. In *De philosopho per cimiterium transeunte* (XXXII), the confrontation with death encourages the philosopher to become a hermit, favouring piety over the practice of wisdom. This is followed by a tale in which Alexander's golden tomb is critiqued by a group of philosophers (XXXIII). The final narrative (XXXIV) depicts a hermit addressing his soul in preparation for death.⁴¹ Foehr-Janssens argues that this series of tales stages an opposition between the transient worldly power of kings

⁴¹ The *Chastoiment* retains the *Disciplina*'s ending. Uhlig argues that through some subtle changes to its conclusion, the *Chastoiment* affirms the disciple's successful acquisition of knowledge, 'Le Dialogue', p. 179. The reader is thus expected to parallel the son's ideal reception of this clerical education.

and the might of wisdom. By omitting these tales, the redactor of the *FPA* is seen to renounce the *Disciplina*'s 'sacralisation du savoir'.⁴² In this light, the *FPA*'s ending could also be seen to rebalance the dominance of the Solomonesque over the Marcoulfian at the end of the *Disciplina*. Rather than the pious philosophers and hermits, the *FPA* end with an untrustworthy servant (XXVII), a thief (XXX), and a *vilain* (XXXI), whose pitfalls illustrate the transience of this world and introduce the contemplation of death. These three tales lead into the redactor's distinct epilogue, which, in contrast to the *Chastoiement*, is the only section in the *FPA* to reveal the influence of the Fourth Lateran Council. Thus, rather than the lofty reflections of philosophers and hermits on mortality, the transgressions of these ordinary figures function as negative *exempla* that lead into and support the sermon-like epilogue.

The teachings of the *Disciplina*'s final series of narratives are transformed into an extended narratorial homily that contrasts the ills of this world with the glory of heaven. After tale XXXI in the *FPA*, the father-son exchange recedes and the voice of the narrator-translator returns, addressing the audience as a preacher:

Seignor, merueillos change fait
 Qui cest siecle por l'autre lait,
 Quer cil est buens, cist est mauvais,
 Cist est de guerre, et cil de pais,
 Cil est de joie, et cist de plor,
 Cist de haïne, et cil d'amor, (*FPA*, ll. 4649-54)

After a long list of oppositions between this world and the next, the narrator then aligns himself with the audience. The repetition of 'Chescuns' (*FPA*, ll. 4663, 4665, 4666) and the use of the first-person plural encourage all to aspire to the glory of heaven:

Et Deus qui nos a otreié

⁴² See Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, 'Quelle fin pour un enseignement d'un père à son fils? La clôture du texte dans les manuscrits des *Fables Pierre Anfors* (*Chastoiement d'un père à son fils*, Version A)' in *Courtly arts and the art of courtliness: selected papers from the Eleventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society*, ed. by Keith Busby and Christopher Kleinhenz (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006), pp. 399-417, p. 409.

Par sa grace et par sa pitié
Que de cel regne rei seron,
Se par pechié ne le perdon, (ll. 4675-78)

At the same time as bringing the father-son education to a close, the penitential tone of the epilogue thus retroactively reframes the *FPA*'s narratives and teachings.

Despite this attempt to terminate the story collection, the epilogue only features as the final component in two of the four copies of the *FPA* in which it is found (see Appendix 1: Table 1). In two manuscripts, fr. 12581 and MS Aldini 219, tales from the *Chastoiment* are added after the epilogue. The cross-contamination of the two French verse redactions underlines the scope of their circulation. The compiler of MS Aldini 219 incorporates the 'missing' tales after the epilogue, and extends them with a unicum (see 1.3.2). By contrast, *De regii incisoris discipulo Nedui nomine* (XX) is added to the end of the copy in fr. 12581, which is a surprising choice given its usual position within the middle of the *Disciplina* (see 1.2). Of the five codices, the copy of the *FPA* in MS Additional 10289 is the only one not to include the epilogue or tale XXXI. Instead tale XXX is followed by a unicum and a unique closing passage, which remains within the father-son dialogue (see 1.4.1).

Intriguingly, the two codices that conclude with tale XXXI and the epilogue display *mouvance* in the earlier stages of the *FPA*. The Augsburg codex includes a unique version of *De Mariano* (XXV) and *De vado* (XVIIIb), distinct from the copies in the *Chastoiment* (see 1.3.1). Thus whilst maintaining the *FPA*'s distinctive ending, the *remanieur* reintegrates the missing tales from the middle of the *Disciplina*. In Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 7517, the *FPA* have a reconfigured first series of tales and are also highly condensed (see 1.4.2). The implications of the variation in the five different copies and its effects on the reception of the *FPA* will be considered within each manuscript context in the detailed analyses below.

Whilst the five extant manuscripts each represent a unique configuration of the *FPA*, the degree of *mouvance* is not as great as in the manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères* or the *Ysopet*. The accumulative dialogue framework that leads from one tale to the next tempers the mobility of the individual narratives and the capacity for tales to be incorporated into the story collection in the same manner as the other two works. Apart from the reintegration of two narratives otherwise found in the *Disciplina* in the Augsburg codex, there are no examples of the integration of extraneous tales.⁴³ Moreover, this is reflected in the presentation of the *FPA* in the manuscripts. Pen-flourished initials are used sporadically throughout, creating no clear boundaries between the dialogue sections and the narratives. Only one example from the corpus has rubrics for the individual tales and this is also the only codex to be formed entirely of short items (MS Aldini 219). The implications of this will be discussed in more detail below (see 1.3.2).⁴⁴ The shadow of the *Disciplina* thus looms over the transmission of the *FPA*, defining the component parts and their arrangement. However, whilst they are the most stable in terms of the shape of the story collection, the *FPA* are found in the broadest range of manuscript contexts. The varied contextualisations demonstrate the malleability of the story collection. In the analyses below, I will illustrate how the configuration of the *FPA* and the arrangement of its co-texts affect and effect the reading experience of the story collection.

⁴³ However, in one of the *Chastoiment* manuscripts, BL, MS Harley 527, a unique redaction of the *fabliau Le Cuvier* (NRCE, vol. V, no. 44, pp. 135-44) is inserted into the series of tales of cheating wives.

⁴⁴ Two examples from the *Chastoiment* corpus include rubrics for the individual tales: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 19152 and Oxford, Bodl., MS Digby 86.

1.2 Dialogue, Discipline and *Deduit* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 12581

In the largest and most elaborately decorated manuscript in the corpus, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 12581, the *FPA* feature as part of an extended pedagogic compendium. The story collection is found with some of the thirteenth century's most popular didactic works: Brunetto Latini's encyclopaedic *Li Livres dou Tresor*,⁴⁵ the Four Evangelists in French prose,⁴⁶ the most widely disseminated version of the vernacular *Lucidaire*, the prose *Moralités des philosophes*,⁴⁷ and Philip of Novara's *Quatre Âges de l'homme*.⁴⁸ The longer works are divided between six discrete units and the *FPA* occupy the final one (see Appendix 1: Table 1.2). Evidently manufactured in a professional setting, the production of fr. 12581 involved the collaboration of multiple scribes and artists, who worked across the various units.⁴⁹ One scribe, who names himself Michael, inscribes the date 1284 at the end of the *Tresor* in red ink: 'Expletus fuit liber iste dies .xix. augustus anno domini .m. cc. lxxxiiii.' (fol. 229v). Whilst all of the texts are in French, parts of the paratext are written in Latin (such as the rubrics for the *Dialogue entre le père et le fils*), which suggests that the original intended reader(s) had at least a basic knowledge of the language. There is not, however, any evidence that affirms the order of the copying units, or if they were designed to form a single codex at the point of inception. Nonetheless, throughout the codex there is a repeated focus on the pedagogic exchange, and this is likewise paralleled in the programme of illustrations, which emphasises the transfer of knowledge and wisdom.

⁴⁵ Brunetto Latini, *Li livres dou Tresor*, ed. by P. Chabaille (Paris: Imprimerie imperiale, 1863).

⁴⁶ Samuel Berger, *La Bible française au Moyen Âge. Étude sur les plus anciennes versions de la Bible écrites en prose de langue d'oïl* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1884).

⁴⁷ Das 'Moralium dogma philosophorum' des Guillaume de Conches. Lateinisch, Altfranzösisch und Mittelniederfränkisch, ed. by John Holmberg (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1929). The attribution of authorship to William of Conches has been disputed. See John R. Williams, 'The Quest for the Author of the *Moralium Dogma Philosophorum*', *Speculum*, 32 (1957): 736-47.

⁴⁸ Les 'Quatre Âges de l'homme'. *Traité moral de Philippe de Navarre*, ed. by Marcel de Fréville (Paris: Didot, 1888).

⁴⁹ On the artists, see Brigitte Roux, *Mondes en miniatures. L'iconographie du 'Livre du Trésor' de Brunetto Latini* (Geneva: Droz, 2009).

The *FPA*'s dialogue framework is foregrounded in this context, which has the effect of assimilating it to the other pedagogic exchanges. The most prominent examples of the master-pupil dialogue are the vernacular translation of Honorius d'Autun's twelfth-century *Elucidarium* (fols 321ra-344ra)⁵⁰ and the piece known as the *Dialogue entre le père et le fils* (fols 344ra-360rb), which commonly features as an appendix to the *Lucidaire*.⁵¹ Following the 'amen' at the end of the *Lucidaire*, a transitional passage unites the two dialogues in this copy:⁵²

Mout me semble que vos nos donnez tost congie biaux tres doulz mestre et est auis que les demandes que ie vos ai faites vous enuient quant vos sitost volez fenir vostre petit liuret. mes encores ne mauez vous dit le gros dou baptesme coment li ancien soloient mener lor enfanz au baptesme . et de mout dautres choses les queles ie desir mout a sauoir *et* a oir. ¶ Li . mestres respont. Se ne fust pour ce que tu me tenisses a recreant *deciple* si po de science monstrar come dex ma mis ou cuer [;] je dirai selonc ce *que* il mest auis. mes un po te parlerai plus grossement [;] pour ce que tu lendendes mieuz.
. Ce est vns dialegues entre le pere . et le fil seur iceste meesmes matiere. Tout enssi come li filz parole au pere . et tout enssi come li peres parole au fil. (fol. 344ra)

After the sophisticated teachings of the *Lucidaire*, the complexity of the topic is said to decrease (the teacher will speak 'plus grossement') and in this manner the interlocutors become more intimately associated. It thus differentiates the scholarly master-pupil exchange from the elementary information on Christian doctrine proffered by the father to his son in the *Dialogue*. Their discourse foreshadows the pragmatic wisdom exchanged between the father-son interlocutors in the *FPA*. The historiated initials that introduce the *FPA* and the *Dialogue* are almost identical (see figs I, 1-2).⁵³

⁵⁰ This redaction is referred to as 'Traduction P' in Yves Lefèvre, *L'Elucidarium et les Lucidaires. Contribution, par l'histoire d'un texte, à l'histoire des croyances religieuses en France au Moyen Âge* (Paris: de Boccard, 1954).

⁵¹ They appear together in five additional thirteenth- and fourteenth-century codices.

⁵² The same transitional piece is also found in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1036 (which has several texts in common with fr. 12581), fr. 24432 and Florence, Bibl. Riccardiana, 2756. See Paul Meyer, 'Les manuscrits des sermons français de Maurice de Sully', *Romania*, 23 (1894): 177-91.

⁵³ The first folio of the *Lucidaire* has unfortunately been mutilated, but it is likely to have been preceded by an illustration. The historiated initial at the start of the *Lucidaire* in fr. 1036 (fol. 20ra)

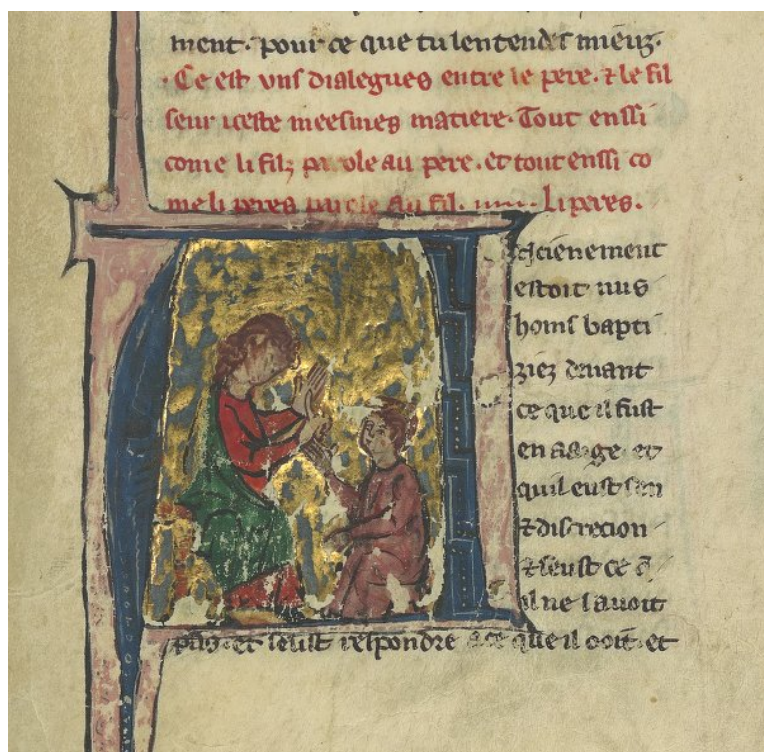


Figure I, 1: *Dialogue entre le père et le fils* (fol. 344ra)



Figure I, 2: *Fables Pierre Aufons* (fol. 408ra)

combines the author portrait with an image of the pedagogic dialogue, picturing the master before a book resting on a lectern and a young disciple holding a book by his feet.

Furthermore, the *mise en page* of the *FPA* encourages the reception of the work as a continuous whole, rather than a story collection. It is the only copy of the story collection written as prose and there are no clear distinctions between the framing dialogue and embedded narratives.⁵⁴ Moreover, blue and red *pieds de mouche* are frequently used throughout the first two quires (fols 408-423) of the *FPA*, which parallels their usage in the *Lucidaire* and *Dialogue*. The *mise en page* and paratext thus further equate the *FPA* to the preceding didactic works in prose and underline the pedagogic function of its dialogue.

Other items in fr. 12581 feature similar didactic exchanges. In the same unit as the *Lucidaire* and *Dialogue*, we find Adam de Suel's French verse translation of Cato's *Distiques* (fols 368v-371v), which incorporates an instructive dialogue between Cato and his son. The first item of the codex, *La Queste del saint Graal* (fols 1ra-83ra), also includes a number of master-student exchanges. In this Arthurian prose romance, the role of the *preudommes* is to interpret the events or visions for the benefit of their knightly interlocutors, such as the hermit who explains to Lancelot why he will not see the Holy Grail: 'Lancelot fait li preudons ceste example tai ie montree por la vie que tu as si longuement menee puis que tu cheis en pechie ce est puis que tu receus le haut ordre de cheualerie.' (fol. 36ra).⁵⁵ The greatest knight finds he is no longer the paragon of chivalric virtue, which in this romance is indissociable from the Christian values of virginity, chastity and humility. In this light, the *Queste* complements not only the instructive form, but also the ideological content of the other works.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ There is no introductory rubric nor explicit. Neither are there rubrics for the narratives.

⁵⁵ *La Queste del saint Graal*, ed. by Albert Pauphilet (Paris: Champion, 2003), p. 123.

⁵⁶ In a recent paper, Keith Busby also read the explanations in the *Queste* in relation to the *Lucidaire*, 'The Manuscript Contexts of the Old French *Lucidaire*', *Spreading the Light Conference*, Canterbury Cathedral Lodge, 15-16 November 2013.

In other works, teachings are voiced from the perspective of age and wisdom to an implicit (or explicit) student or friend. The prose *Moralités des philosophes* (fols 379ra-387ra) are introduced by a portrait of the author, in which he is presented as a cleric with a book before him. The work begins with a dream vision in which the narrator meets ‘une granz *compaignie* de clers. Qui sambloient estre molt hautes persones de cors *et* daage’ (fol. 376ra), the first being ‘Tulles’ and second ‘Seneques’. When he wakes up, he decides to put the ‘moralites’ and ‘prouerbes’ he witnesses in ‘.i. liuret’ (fol. 376ra), which he presents to his friend:

‘Biax chiers amis sachiez que por *uostre* amor *et* por *vostre* preu. ai ie fait cest liuret. Et si ie vos *doing* . que ie ueil que vos igardoiz . por vos ansaignier . *comment* vos deuez viure. Et neporquant ie ne vos ai pas donee toute la science de moralitez . mais vne petite partie...’ (fol. 376rb)⁵⁷

The work then considers the virtues to embody and vices to eschew, frequently addressing the (unidentified) reader as ‘vos’. The narrator also implicates the reader’s (repeated) engagement with the text in more general terms: ‘Porce pri ie a celui qui vodra mener honeste vie *que* il oie souant *et* antende ces paroles. *et* si gart *que* il les requiere plusors foies. Quar nule parole niert ia top oie.’ (fol. 386va). Within the *Moralités* we find a brief father-son exchange, in the form of Alexander’s chastisement by his father for giving too ‘outrageusement’: ‘Si li *anuoia* vnes letres antex paroles. Biau filz *que* est ce que tu fais. Cuide tu faire macidoneis loiaus par doner. Tu viax *qu’il* ne te taignent mie a roi. mais a preuost.’ (fol. 379vb). This forms part of a warning against giving unreasonably and developing relationships based merely on bestowing gifts. This same exemplum is elaborated in the subsequent work, Philip of Novara’s *Quatre Âges* (fols 387ra-407va). In the *Quatre Âges*, the narrative context is elaborated and Alexander has the opportunity to respond to his

⁵⁷ The *Moralités* (and the Latin source the *Moralium dogma philosophorum*) begin by insisting on the benefits of giving advice ‘briement’ and in small parts, using a citation from Horace (fol. 376ra-b), which recalls the prologue of the *Disciplina*. Indeed, at the end of the *Moralités* the message for the reader is not to attempt to memorise everything, but to put its parts to good use.

father's critique, stating that he would prefer to have the 'meniere de preuost' (fol. 393va). It forms part of the teaching on youth, the period in which a young noble makes his wealth and establishes his household (*Quatre Âges*, §§ 67-70). In contrast to the miserliness of his father, Alexander's response is valued in this context of chivalric *largesce*. Thus whilst copied alongside each other in the same codicological unit, these two didactic works are distinct in ethos. The clerical and measured concerns of the *Moralités* are complemented by the theory in action, the pragmatic and chivalric realities of life for a noble as presented in the *Quatre Âges*. There is not an explicit or introductory rubric that indicates the end of the *Moralités* or introduces the beginning of the *Quatre Âges*. The beginning of the latter is marked by a historiated initial which introduces the subject of childhood, the first section of Philip's work.⁵⁸ This is the first of four thematic historiated initials that divide the work into its component parts. Fr. 12581 contains the most complete copy of the *Quatre Âges*, which covers the upbringing of noble children, their adolescence, how to behave in one's prime, and concludes with old age. Whilst there is no identified recipient of the teaching, the direct address 'vous' is used throughout. In contrast to the *Moralités*, his teachings are informed primarily by experience, underlined by the emphasis on the narrator's age in the first line: 'Cil qui fist cest *conte* auoit .lxx. anz passez quant il *lamprint* a faire' (fol. 387ra). This justifies his education of others: 'Dont il deuoit miex sauoir ansaignier les autres . *et* doctriener' (fol. 387ra).

Like the *Moralités*, the longest work in the codex, Brunetto Latini's *Tresor* (fols 89ra-229vb) is addressed to a close acquaintance: 'Et porce que le tresor qui ci est ne doit estre donez se a home *non* qui soit soffisans a si haute richesce . la baillera i e a toi biex dous amis. Car tu en ies bien dignes selonc *mon iugement*' (fol. 90vb). The intimacy between the narrator and his friend is established by the repeated use of 'tu'.

⁵⁸ By contrast, the historiated initial in the thirteenth-century codex, BnF, f. fr. 17177, pictures a tonsured figure in a chair teaching a child who is sitting before him (fol. 275r).

The *Tresor* represents an exhaustive treatise that covers everything from the creation of the world and important figures of Christian history to astronomy, ethics, rhetoric and good governance. The three illustrations that introduce each book add different components to the construction of this author, his authority and function. The historiated initial that introduces the first book (fol. 90v) crystallises the metaphor of knowledge as wealth, depicting the encyclopaedia as the treasure amassed by the author.⁵⁹ At the start of the second book, the narrator refers to the book's composer as 'li maistres' (fol. 139vb), and the accompanying historiated initial pictures the clerical author in the midst of composition. This traditional author portrait parallels the individualised portraits that accompany the Four Evangelists, who are each pictured in the act of writing. In the context of fr. 12581, the visual emphasis on the transfer of knowledge in writing associates the writers of the Gospels with the medieval authors.⁶⁰ The image at the beginning of book three of the *Tresor* presents Brunetto Latini in a third guise: as teacher before an audience of students. In this image, he is pictured holding a ferule, a disciplinary object associated with depictions of Grammar.⁶¹ This image is accompanied by his full name: 'maistres brunez latins' (fol. 191ra). Thus, as teacher his identity is complete.

In addition to the long didactic and religious works, a diverse variety of supplementary shorter items are found at the end of the copying units in fr. 12581 (see Appendix 1: Table 1.3). These include over 60 lyrics primarily attributed to Thibaut de Champagne, ranging from the *grand chant courtois* to *jeux-partis* and Marian songs. The lyrics mostly fill the final pages of existing quires, apart from one example in which supplementary quires are added to incorporate extra lyrics. This longest

⁵⁹ Roux, p. 161.

⁶⁰ This can likewise be noted in relation to the portraits of the *auctores* and medieval authors in Ars., MS 3142 (see 3.3.2).

⁶¹ Interestingly, Grammar is frequently gendered as female, suggesting an inversion in this instance. Roux, p. 173.

series of songs appears at the end of the third unit, which contains the Four Evangelists (fols 312v-320v). Thus rather than being simply ‘filler’ material, their inclusion appears to be more contrived. At the end of the fourth unit, the dyad of *Des XXIII manieres de vilains* (fols 372va-373vb)⁶² and the *fabliau Les Tresces* (fols 373vb-375ra) introduce elements of social critique as well as the cruder Marcoufian voice.⁶³ Within this dominantly didactic context, space is allocated to more pleasurable literary registers, from the love lyric to the bawdy comic tale.⁶⁴

Whilst there are no additional short items at the end of the unit with the *FPA*, the version of *De regii incisoris discipulo Nedui nomine* (XX) from the *Chastoieiment* appears after the epilogue. The copying is continuous and the narrative ends at the bottom of the last verso page (fol. 429v).⁶⁵ In the context of fr. 12581, this addendum plays a similar role to the shorter items found at the end of the other copying units. Like Renart in XXIII, the tailor’s apprentice, Nedui, is a representative of *engin*. After being denied his share of honey and bread, Nedui takes revenge on his master and causes him to be beaten. In this copy uniquely, Nedui is renamed ‘Deduit’, and thus becomes the embodiment of pleasure.⁶⁶ At the end of the codex, it offers a playful retort to the solemn epilogue of the *FPA*.

In light of the luxurious nature of this manuscript and the breadth of the didactic content, we might speculate that it was intended for the education of a young noble.⁶⁷ The projected reader is invited to identify with the pupils, the sons, friends, and knights addressed in the texts and pictured in the illustrations. Indeed,

⁶² Edmond Faral, ‘Des Vilains ou Des XXII[I] manieres de vilains’, *Romania*, 48 (1922): 213-64.

⁶³ *Les Tresces I*, *NRCE*, vol. 7, no. 69, pp. 207-58.

⁶⁴ Like the *FPA*, all the shorter items in verse are written out as prose.

⁶⁵ In the last third of folio 429rb, the writing is smaller and the words are more closely cramped together. Whether this narrative was part of the exemplar or not, it suggests that the scribe wanted to ensure that there was enough space to include it on the final folio.

⁶⁶ Foehr-Janssens, ‘Quelle fin’, p. 414.

⁶⁷ The presence of the text on falconry (fols 83rb-87rb) also supports this assumption.

the twenty additional lines that uniquely feature in this copy of the prologue of the *FPA* (after l. 58) begin with the assertion of its benefit for the ‘iones hons’:

Molt a bon *comm*macail de bien
Li iones hons qui nule riens
Ne desirre tant a auoir
Comme il fait san *et* savoir. (fol. 408r)

Thus, the compilation as a whole represents an extended and encyclopaedic *chastoiment*.⁶⁸ The content of the longer works covers the spectrum of required reading for the young patrician, and the shorter elements add variety and *deduit* to fr. 12581. These moments of reprieve are epitomised in the addition of *De regii incisoris discipulo Nedui nomine* (XX) to the end of the *FPA*. Whilst this brief narrative does not subvert the overall agenda of the compilation, the apprentice’s revenge on his master gives the student, in a Marcoulfian counter-gesture, the final word and one that is sure to have elicited the laughter of the extratextual apprentice.

1.3 The *Fables Pierre Aufons* between this World and the Next

In the next two examples from the corpus, I will illustrate how the co-texts of the *FPA* elaborate the theme of *memento mori*, which is introduced at the end of the story collection. Yet, these two codices represent very different modes of engagement with the material. In Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek MS I, 4, 2, 1, the *Dit du Corps* is appended to the end of *FPA*, and together they form one codicological unit in a composite devotional compilation. In the second example, Pavia, MS Aldini 219, the compiler reinstates the missing tales from the *Disciplina*. Yet, in addition to

⁶⁸ London, BL, MS Harley 4388, one of the manuscripts in the *Chastoiment* corpus, features the *Chastoiment* with other works formed of a pedagogic dialogue: featuring Sanson de Nanteuil’s *Proverbes de Salemon* and Elie de Winestre’s Anglo-Norman redaction of Cato’s *Distichs*. The fourth item is Guischart de Beaulieu’s sermon, which is also found with the *Chastoiment* in MS Digby 86.

‘completing’ the ending, the narratives that frame the *FPA* prolong the dynamics of the story collection.

1.3.1 Mind, Body and Soul in Augsburg, Universitätsbibliothek, MS I, 4, 2, 1

If the luxuriously decorated fr. 12581 represents a high-end production, the Augsburg codex is a far more low-grade affair. This thirteenth-century composite manuscript is made of basic parchment with crude reparatory stitches.⁶⁹ In contrast to the gold leaf and wide-ranging colour palate of fr. 12581, the decoration is limited, amounting only to large but unrefined red and blue puzzle initials, alongside smaller plain red initials. It is unclear whether the discrete codicological units were originally intended to form one codex, but the late medieval wooden binding and the series of alphabetical quire marks indicate that the codex has been in this form since at least the fifteenth century (see Appendix 1: Table 1.4).⁷⁰ The *FPA* were originally copied with the *Dit du Corps*, a homiletic apostrophe addressed to the body and written in helinandian stanzas.⁷¹ The unit that precedes the *FPA* contains Herman de Valenciennes’ *Bible* and the Renclus de Molliens’s *Miserere*.⁷² The units immediately after the *FPA* include the *Moralités des philosophes* (as found in fr. 12581), and two shorter texts: *Doctrinal Sauvage*, and a French prose description of the Holy Land (also found in fr. 12581). By the late Middle Ages (or possibly earlier), these items were bound to form the current devotional and didactic compilation.⁷³

⁶⁹ This codex formerly belonged to the Oettingen-Wallerstein collection, and was previously housed in a Franciscan monastery in Maihingen.

⁷⁰ The individual codicological units were copied by at least three scribes from the thirteenth century onwards. This information is based on a colour digitisation and not the physical examination of the manuscript.

⁷¹ *La Langue et la littérature françaises depuis le IX^{ème} siècle jusqu’au XIV^{ème} siècle*, ed. by Karl Bartsch (Paris: Maisonneuve & C. Leclerc, 1887), cols 547-54.

⁷² *Li romans de Carité et Miserere du Renclus de Moiliens*, ed. by A.-G. Van Hamel (Paris: Vieweg, 1885).

⁷³ The style of initial at the beginning of the *FPA* is also found at the start of the *Bible*, *Miserere*, the *Moralités*, and a simpler version is used at the start of the *Doctrinal Sauvage*. This could indicate, at the

This witness of the *FPA* has a more Solomonesque nuance than the other copies. For example, the discussion of true nobility that precedes tale III (*FPA*, ll. 719-30) is replaced by a passage unique to this copy that focuses on clerical values (fol. 66ra).⁷⁴ The order of tales does not stray from the vulgate, apart from the re-introduction of two elements from the middle of the *Disciplina*, which do not otherwise appear in the *FPA*: *De vado* (XVIIIb) and *De Mariano* (XXV). They are not found in any other copies of the *FPA* and are distinct from the versions in the *Chastoient*. In *De Mariano* (XXV), a contemptible king gathers his council to advise him on the revolt of his subjects. Afraid of acknowledging the king's wrongdoing, a group of seven philosophers go to visit the eminent Marianus. They eventually find the holy recluse, whose words prophesy the king's downfall and imminent death. Four of the philosophers return to find this to be true and three others remain with Marianus. In the Augsburg copy, the redactor voices the tale in more overtly religious terms than in the version in the *Chastoient*, recalling contemporary pious narratives, such as the Old French verse *Vie des Pères* (see chapter 2). For example, the king's acknowledgement of his potential sins is elaborated: 'Que por la malvaistié de moi/Par mon pechié et par mon vice / Viegne au regne ceste malice' (Roesle ed., p. 47, ll. 26-28 (fol. 84r)). The reclusive Marianus is presented as 'li sains hons' (Roesle ed., p. 48, l. 60 (fol. 84v)), and is distinguished from the immoral king's 'philosophers' by his close relationship with God: 'Mais sains espirs li a moustré / De la cose le verité' (Roesle ed., p. 48, ll. 64-65 (fol. 84v)). Furthermore, the three wise men who remain with Marianus in his 'ermitage' (Roesle ed., p. 48, l. 107 (fol. 84v))

very least, that the same workshop produced these different gatherings. Whilst the organisation could be related to length (the shorter units are grouped at the end), the quire marks suggest a conscious attempt to fix the order.

⁷⁴ An uneducated man is compared to a wolf that fails to capture his prey, and 'franchise' is said not to originate from the 'cuer' as in the other copies, but to derive from 'sens', making it a quality associated with *clergie*. In this section, I will be referring to the following edition, based on the Augsburg manuscript, *Le Chastoient d'un père à son fils: Traduction en vers français de la 'Disciplina clericalis' de Petrus Alfonsus*, ed. by Michael Roesle (Munich: Ackermann, 1899).

are presented as dedicating their lives to God: ‘Se remetent pour dieu servir / Et pour sa doctrine coillir’ (Roesle ed., p. 48, ll. 108-109 (fol. 84v)). Whilst illustrating the importance of just leadership, this redaction recasts the tale in a more spiritual light through its emulation of the discourse of the vernacular pious narrative.

In addition to the *remaniement* of *De Mariano* (XXV), the conclusion of this copy of the *FPA* is also framed in a more explicitly religious manner. Six supplementary lines on Lucifer’s fall further develop the story collection’s sermon-like epilogue⁷⁵

C’est dyables qui nous espie,
Qui enuers nous a grant enuie
Pour ce que bien a en memoire
Que la joie aurons et la gloire
Que il par son orgueil perdi,
Quant il trebuscha et chaï. (Roesle ed., p. 56, ll. 75-80 (fol. 88rb))

A final call for God’s blessing concludes the devotional development: ‘Diex nous doinst sa benéichon / In secula seculorum.’ (Roesle ed., p. 56, ll. 81-82 (fol. 88rb)). In addition, the *FPA* are immediately followed by the *Dit du Corps*. It is marked with a six-line-high blue and red puzzle initial, repeating the same style of initial found at the start of the *FPA*. However, it is only after the *Dit* that ‘Explicit’ (fol. 89vb) is written to conclude the two pieces. Thus, whilst the large initial marks the *Dit* as a new item, the joint explicit appends it to the end of the *FPA*.

The *Dit* builds on the epilogue by introducing the soul and the cleansing effects of confession. The apostrophe begins with a condemnation of the body’s worldly appetites, echoing the rhyme of ‘savoir’ and ‘avoir’ found at the start of the *FPA*: ‘Corps, en toi n’a point de savoir, / Car tu golouses trop avoir / robes et bons chevaux de pris’ (Bartsch ed., col. 547, ll. 15-17).⁷⁶ Worldly preoccupations are not placed in contradistinction to the enduring benefits of *sens* as in the *FPA*’s prologue,

⁷⁵ These six lines also feature in the Pavia copy.

⁷⁶ ‘Qui veut honour au siècle auoir / Premierainement doit sauoir / Que ne puet a honour venir / Qui ne se velt a bien tenir;’ (Roesle ed., p. 1, ll. 1-4 (fol. 62ra)).

but represent a symptom of the body's lack of 'savoir' and miseducation ('tu n'es mie bien apris', Bartsch ed., col. 547, l. 21). The second stanza introduces the body's mistreatment of the soul. Rather than maintaining the sibling ties expected between a brother and sister, the body is the cause of the soul's damnation: 'tu n'es pas frere, anchois es leus' (Bartsch ed., col. 547, l. 31). By the penultimate stanza, the relationship takes a different form: the body is likened to a lover, neglectful of his 'amie / qui doit estre roine et dame' (Bartsch ed., col. 553, ll. 4-5). Yet, there is the possibility for redemption. The 'dyables' can be combatted by 'penitanche' (Bartsch ed., col. 552, l. 12). The body has the opportunity to confess and save the soul, thanks to God's generous nature: 'Cors, diex est mout plus debonaire / que ne soit ne prevos ne maire,' (Bartsch ed., col. 552, ll. 17-18) and 'diex est aussi dous com lais' (Bartsch ed., col. 552, l. 23). God will forgive if a man 'repentans veille estre mais, / et aquitier veut ses mesfais' (Bartsch ed., col. 552, ll. 26-27). In addition to expanding the penitential agenda of the *FPA*'s epilogue, this apostrophe replaces the *Disciplina*'s (and *Chastoiement*'s) final unit, *De heremita suam corrigente animam* (XXXIV), in which a hermit addresses his soul. Thus, in addition to the re-incorporation of *De vado* (XVIIIb) and *De Mariano* (XXV), the *Disciplina*'s content could also be seen to influence this final supplement to the *FPA*.

Combined with the religious *remaniement* of *De Mariano* (XXV), the presence of the *Dit du corps* renders the reading experience of the *FPA* more overtly religious. Furthermore, the late medieval binding places the unit containing the *FPA* and *Dit* within a global context of religious and moral education. Within the corpus of *Disciplina* manuscripts, this type of appropriation is paralleled in Paris, BnF, f. lat. 2134. In this fourteenth-century manuscript, the *Disciplina* is transformed to suit the needs of mendicant friars, with certain aphorisms and tales eliminated and others

adapted and added to make the work more explicitly Christian.⁷⁷ Whilst not to the same degree as in this Latin preacher's handbook, the Augsburg codex suggests the same desire to enhance the spiritual weight of the *FPA*. Yet, the minimal paratextual division suggests that the tales were not intended to be extracted and put to other uses. The various Latin inscriptions and handwriting practice (such as on the blank folios 101v and 105v) indicate it may have been used and read in an educational setting. Unlike the Marcoulfian wink shared with Nedui/Deduit at the end of fr. 12581, the reader of the Augsburg manuscript is invited to engage in a Solomonesque internal chastisement, in a dialogue in which the body's only response is repentance.

1.3.2 The Conventional and the Carnavalesque in Pavia, Biblioteca

Universitaria, MS Aldini 219

The *Dit du Corps* also appears with the *FPA* in the less strictly devotional context of the Pavia codex. In this early fourteenth-century compilation of short verse items, the themes of *contemptus mundi* and *memento mori* are explored in various guises from the first item, Helinand de Froidmont's *Vers de la mort*, to the text of the same name by Robert le Clerc (see Appendix 1: Table 1.5). The manuscript also incorporates an unusual number of works on the contemporary political situation, such as the three items on the Count of Flanders (fols 4vb-13vb), the *Lettre que Verité envoia au roi de France* (fols 53vb-55ra) and the satire against the English at the time of Edward I (fols 55ra-56rb). These items are all written from a perspective that favours the French. Within this organic multi-text codex, the *FPA* feature at the core, traversing, on the one hand, the themes of just leadership, and on the other, *contemptus mundi* and

⁷⁷ See Tolan, pp. 150-54.

memento mori.⁷⁸ However, my reading will focus specifically on the two items that immediately precede and follow the *FPA*. Whilst the first promotes the Solomonesque value of *sens*, the second proffers a Marcoulfian response. Before considering these co-texts, I will first demonstrate how the theme of *memento mori* becomes more prominent at the end of this augmented copy of the *FPA*.

In the Pavia codex, the final series of tales from the *Disciplina* are reinstated after the *FPA*'s epilogue: *De Socrate* (XXVIII), *De philosopho per cimiterium transeunte* (XXXII), *De aurea Alexandri sepultura* (XXXIII), and *De heremita suam corrigente animam* (XXXIV).⁷⁹ Extracted from the *Chastoiment*, they offer another example of the cross-contamination of the two redactions. They are then followed by one further item, a unicum about an annually elected king that is associated with neither the *Disciplina* nor the *Chastoiment*, which is entitled in the rubric: 'Dun roi qui estoit enuoie chascun an en essil' (fol. 49ra). In the kingdom of Carthage, there used to be 'un fel usage' (Mussafia ed., l. 270) which demanded the election of a new king each year. At the end of their reign, the retired king was sent into exile, 'Povre d'avoir et nu et vil' (Mussafia ed., l. 280). During one king's reign, a 'sage' advises him to prepare for his retirement rather than simply relish his short time in power ('Pensez a ce qu'est à venir', Mussafia ed., l. 352). In an extension of the framing dialogue, the father presents an allegorical reading of the story ('Or orras que ce senefie', Mussafia ed., l. 356), revealing how it signifies the preparations one should make for the afterlife. Whilst continuing the father-son dialogue, the introduction of the allegorical mode diverges from the framing dialogue of the *FPA* (and *Disciplina*). Yet, the integration of this unicum and its explication reinforces the lesson put forth in the final series of

⁷⁸ The majority of items were copied continuously. However, Jehan Pitart's *Dit de bigamie* (56rb-57rb) was added by a later fourteenth-century hand at the end of the seventh quire.

⁷⁹ The figure of Socrates in the *Chastoiment*'s version of tale XXVIII is renamed 'Diogenes'. A transitional teaching on *memento mori* is added between XXXII and XXXIII. These tales and other unpublished items found in this codex are edited by Adolfo Mussafia, 'Über eine altfranzösische Handschrift der k. Universitätsbibliothek zu Pavia', *Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Classe*, 64 (1870): 545-616.

tales in this copy (both the narratives usually found at the end of the *FPA* and those interpolated from the *Chastoiment*). In this light, the *remanieur*'s extension of the *FPA* reveals a distinct interest in the theme of *memento mori*, and not necessarily the desire 'to complete' the work according to the Latin hypotext.⁸⁰ Unlike with the other two story collections, the interpolation of tales extraneous to the textual tradition is dependent upon the *remanieur*'s willingness (or ability) to imitate the dialogue framework of the *FPA*. In this instance, it involves a shift in the mode of reading.⁸¹ Furthermore, the *remanieur* of the copy in the Pavia codex also concludes the supplementary series with an additional epilogue praising the pedagogic role of the father:

Cist rommans faut cest est la somme
 Diex face merci au preudomme
 Qui enseigne ouec son enfant
 Touz ceus qui orront le rommant
 Vous qui estes en ceste place
 Priez dieu que merci li face (fol. 50ra)

The boundaries of the story collection are then marked by the closing paratext: 'Explicit de pierre aufour' (fol. 50ra). The textual and paratextual frameworks thus clearly integrate the additional narratives into the *FPA*. It is possible that this extended version of the *FPA* was already in circulation. However, the increased emphasis on *memento mori* at the end of this copy complements this context and contributes to the broader considerations of worldly behaviour and the afterlife.

This fourteenth-century compilation is the *only* manuscript in which the *FPA* are compiled exclusively with short items and it is also the *only* codex to include rubrics for the individual tales. Two manuscripts of the *Chastoiment* include rubrics for the narratives, and significantly, they also consist of a large number of shorter

⁸⁰ The desire 'to complete' the *Vie des Pères* underlies the addition (but not duplication) of additional tales from the story collection in the fourteenth-century codicological units of Chantilly, MS 475 (see 2.3.2).

⁸¹ In nouv. acq. fr. 7517, the framing dialogue of the *FPA* is imitated in its unique 'sequel', which incorporates the subjects of love, and then, chivalry (see 1.4.2).

items, including *fabliaux*.⁸² Thus, there appears to be a link between the number of short items and the usage of rubrics to divide up the story collection. In the Pavia codex, the rubrics highlight the narrative content of the tales and offer the reader the opportunity to access the stories directly and selectively. They also encourage their interaction with the other textual units in the codex. Nevertheless, the boundaries of the story collection are clearly demarcated by the four-line-high pen-flourished initial that introduces the collection and by the concluding explicit. The first initial of the *FPA* is the same size and style of initial as those found at the beginning of the surrounding short narratives. Conversely, the *FPA*'s tales are marked by two-line-high initials. Thus whilst the rubrics make connections between the *FPA*'s narratives and the other short texts, the initials signify their contingent role within the story collection.

Positioned at the core of the codex, the extended *FPA* are sandwiched between two humorous narratives, *La Bourse pleine de Sens* and *Le Bouchier d'Abeville*. Whilst the editors of the *NRCF* define them both as *fabliaux*, the first chastises pleasures of the flesh and the second celebrates them. In *La Bourse pleine de Sens* (fols 15ra-18ra), the tale preceding the *FPA*, rather than depict the more common topos of a cheating wife – exemplified in the five tales at the heart of the *FPA* – we have an example of an unfaithful *husband*.⁸³ Following the *Dit des dames*, which outlines nine reasons not to slander women, it adds a positive example of a loyal wife to the debate about women and marriage within the *FPA* and codex as a whole.⁸⁴ In this comic tale, a loyal wife reprimands her philandering spouse for his affair, but he cares little about being the source of the town's gossip. Before setting off for the fair in Troyes, he asks her what kind of jewels or clothes she wants him to bring back, and she

⁸² Paris, BnF, f. fr. 19152 and Oxford, Bodl., MS Digby 86.

⁸³ *NRCF*, vol. II, no. 8, pp. 107-49.

⁸⁴ For example in the five tales on cheating wives in the *FPA*, and the later addition of *Dit de bigamie* (fols 56r-57r).

simply responds that all she requires is a 'plaine bourse de sen' (l. 69). This plays on the double-meaning of 'sens' as both 'wisdom' and the Burgundian town, Sens. After finishing his business at the fair and buying a dress for his mistress, the naive husband tries to find the 'item' his wife requested. He meets a shrewd Spanish merchant, who advises him to test the loyalty of his mistress by pretending to have lost his fortune. The philandering husband then realises the true meaning of his wife's words as his fickle and materialistic mistress rejects him. By contrast, his wife remains constant no matter whether he is rich or poor. In the unusually lengthy epilogue (37 lines), the narrator identifies himself as 'Jehan li galois d'aube pierre' (l. 411), and underlines the moral agenda of the work through comparisons that highlight the risks of believing and making alliances with untrustworthy women:

Dit si *comme* la fueille d'ierre
 Se tient fresche nouuele *et* vert
 Est cuer de fame aouuert
 Touz temps *pour* home deceuoir
 Pour ce est *fous* sachés de voir
 Li homs qui a bone moillier
Quant il se va ailleurs soillier
 A foles garces piperesses
Qui plus que chiens sont lecheresses (ll. 412-20)

Whilst humorous in tone and antifeminist in message, it nonetheless promotes marital fidelity and chastises the material greed and unruly sexual appetites of both the husband and his mistress. The value of 'sens' over worldly 'avoir' in the *La Bourse pleine de Sens* thus offers an alternative prelude to the valorisation of 'sens' in the prologue of the *FPA*.

In contrast to the orthodox moral message of the *La Bourse pleine de Sens*, the narrative placed after the *FPA*, *Le Bouchier d'Abeville* (fols 50ra-53vb), is a bawdy and raucous affair that leaves the audience to judge the behaviour of its cast of immoral miscreants.⁸⁵ A young butcher looking for a bed for the night calls on a morally

⁸⁵ *NRCE*, vol. III, no. 18, pp. 237-335.

corrupt priest. The latter initially refuses his request for shelter, but when the butcher returns with a sheep (stolen from the priest's flock), he is welcomed to stay and enjoys a feast of meat and alcohol. The butcher ends the evening's excess by sleeping with the priest's young servant girl. The next morning before departing, he sleeps with the priest's *amie*. Both women are seduced with the offer of the (stolen) sheepskin. He then sells the same sheepskin back to its owner, the priest, before leaving the unruly household in mayhem. At the end of this riotous tale, rather than provide a moral, the narrator asks the audience to decide who should keep the sheepskin:

Vous qui cest conte oi auez
 Huitasce d'amiens vous demande
 Et si vous prie *et commande*
 Que vous fachiez le iugement
 Chascun en'die son talent
 Chascun en'die son vouloir
 Liquei~~us~~ doit mie~~us~~ la pel auoir
 Ou li prestres ou la prestresse
 Ou la baiasse pinprenesse (ll. 554-62)

Audacious and engaging, it takes the reader away from the morbid considerations at the end of the extended *FPA*, and inverts the extensive allegorical explanation that concluded the tale about the annual king, asking the audience instead to form their own judgement. In a Marcoulfian counter-gesture, this engaging tale invokes the domain of worldly desires and gluttony, offering a retort to the Solomonesque moralisation on the sins of greed and lust in *La Bourse pleine de Sens*. As with the husband of the first tale, the material and physical longings of the priest, his mistress and the servant girl essentially lead to their turmoil. The butcher, however, gleefully gets away with theft and deception, sating his desires whilst leaving a path of destruction. He is neither chastised within the narrative, nor blamed by the narrator at the end. Thus whilst the first of these two comic framing tales promotes a more conventional moral message, the second offers up a carnivalesque revelry in the

pleasures of the flesh. *Le Bouchier d'Abeville* thus offers a riotous response to the *FPA*, especially in light of the more sombre final series of tales in this copy.

1.4 Lessons in Love

The lessons on love that accompany the *FPA* in London, BL, Additional MS 10289 and Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 7517 transcend the teachings of the story collection. The *FPA* (and *Disciplina*) offer practical (and antifeminist) advice on marriage and women, but the story collection does not educate on the sentimental side of these relationships. The women in the central series of tales (IX to XI, XIII and XIV) are adulterous wives or guileful older women rather than objects of affection. Indeed, by the end of tale XIV, the son despairs at the idea of having a wife, pledging never to get married (*FPA*, ll. 2215-18). The 'realities' of marriage depicted are the love triangles more commonly found in the *fabliaux*.⁸⁶ However, in *De integro amico* (II), the merchant from Baghdad experiences what turns out to be a bout of love sickness during his visit to Egypt: 'Quant n'i truevent mal ne dolor, /Que ce est passion d'amor' (*FPA*, ll. 387-88). When the host realises the cause of his guest's illness, he brings before him the women of the household, including his daughters. Yet, the object of his affection turns out to be the young girl his friend was preparing to marry. The host then gives up his planned wife for the sake of his friend's well-being. In this instance, the 'love' element is subsidiary to the friendship between the two men; it plays a role in the consolidation of their homosocial bonds. Indeed, the relationships between men are said to be the 'clef de voûte du recueil'.⁸⁷ The discourse of courtly love also appears within the series on cheating wives, in *De canicula lacrimante* (XIII). The young suitor's lengthy complaints (*FPA*, ll. 1635-1766)

⁸⁶ See Nykrog, pp. 60-66.

⁸⁷ Uhlig, 'Le Dialogue', p. 177.

are a particular innovation of the *FPA*, and include some lyric-inspired internal dialogues reminiscent of romances by Chrétien de Troyes and Gautier d'Arras:

'Deus!' dist il, 'tant mein male vie,
Tant sui folez! – Et je por quei?
Quant je aim ce qui n'aime mei.
Je n'en puis mais. – Si puis. – Coment?
Je l'aamai trop folement...' (*FPA*, ll. 1724-28)⁸⁸

The engagement with *fin'amor* is also apparent in the reference to 'Andrieu qui fu morz a Paris' (*FPA*, l. 1672), whose unfortunate death is discussed in the *chansons* of *trouvères* and troubadours.⁸⁹ The lover here states that if André had taken his advice he would not have died, 'Quer il fu morz par mauvestié' (*FPA*, l. 1688). However, the consummation of their courtship has little to do with the actions or qualities of the suitor. An old woman intervenes on behalf of the male lover, and convinces the lady that if she does not submit, she will turn into a weeping bitch.⁹⁰ This *exemplum* is not recounted to educate on courtship, but is used to illustrate how even the most virtuous wives may be led to transgress.

The two thirteenth-century manuscripts that include the co-texts on love are also both associated with religious institutions: BL, Additional MS 10289 was copied in the Norman monastery of Mont-Saint-Michel; and Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 7517 has possible links with Southwick Priory, an Augustinian religious house in Hampshire.⁹¹ Geographically, they originate at a distance from the other manuscripts in the corpus, and provide evidence that the *FPA* were also in circulation in England.

⁸⁸ For a list of the lyrics evoked in this passage, see Pietro Alfonsi, '*Disciplina clericalis*'. *Sapienza orientale e scuola di novelle*, ed. by Cristiano Leone (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2010), p. XLVIII.

⁸⁹ See Cristiano Leone, 'Une relecture occidentale de la didactique orientale: de la *Disciplina Clericalis* et ses traductions-réécritures', in *Didaktisches Erzählen: Formen literarischer Belehrung in Orient und Okzident*, ed. by Regula Forster and Romy Günthart (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), pp. 227-41, p. 237.

⁹⁰ On the topos of the old woman as *entremetteuse*, see Karen Pratt, '*De vetula*: the Figure of the Old Woman in Medieval French Literature', in *Old Age in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Interdisciplinary Approaches to a Neglected Topic*, ed. by Albrecht Classen (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007), pp. 321-42.

⁹¹ A list of rents owed to Southwick Priory is found on the bifolium at the end of nouv. acq. fr. 7517, see François Avril and Patricia Stirnemann, *Catalogue des manuscrits enluminés d'origine insulaire, VIIe - XXe siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, Département des manuscrits, Centre de recherche sur les manuscrits enluminés, 1987), notice n° 158, p. 117.

In both cases, the teachings on amorous relationships bear ironic and sceptical undertones.⁹² Indeed, the texts problematise the very possibility of educating on love.

1.4.1 Love and Marriage: Responses to the *Fables Pierre Aufons* in London, BL, MS Additional 10289

Of all the manuscripts that contain the *FPA*, MS Additional 10289 is the most miscellaneous (see Appendix 1: Table 1.6).⁹³ Its oldest item is a vernacular history of the monastery of Mont-Saint-Michel. Later in the thirteenth century, additional material was copied. The first of these texts is André de Coutances' *Roman de la Résurrection*, a vernacular verse reworking of the *Evangelium Nicodemi*.⁹⁴ In this redaction, the author deliberately eschews the Passion in order to focus on the resurrection of Christ, in particular the Harrowing of Hell. This is immediately juxtaposed with the *Vanjance Nostre Seigneur*, a *chanson de geste* that combines the avenging of the crucifixion, the curing of Vespasian with the veil of Veronica and the capture of Jerusalem by Titus, and thus follows on chronologically from the *Resurrection*, forming a dyad on Christian historiography.⁹⁵ These are followed by a series of medical recipes.⁹⁶ In certain cases, they are introduced as advice from a philosopher, recalling the initial series of teachings that follow the prologue in the *FPA*:

Un philosophe enseigna a vn roi que boiure chascun matin .ii. sangloz deue
chaude le rendroit si sain quil nauroit mestier dautre medecine. Vn autre

⁹² Donald Maddox highlights similar characteristics in *chastoiments d'amour*, see 'Avatars courtois d'un genre du discours clerical: le *chastoiment*,' in *Courtly Literature and Clerical Culture: Selected Papers from the Tenth Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society*, ed. by Christoph Huber and Henrike Lähnemann (Tübingen: Attempto Verlag, 2002), pp. 161-73.

⁹³ I thank Daniël Ermens for his verification of the codicological description of this codex.

⁹⁴ *Trois Versions rimées de 'L'Evangile de Nicodème' par Chrétien, André de Coutances et un anonyme*, ed. by Gaston Paris and Alphonse Bos (Paris: Didot, 1885).

⁹⁵ *The Oldest Version of the Twelfth-Century Poem 'La Venjance Nostre Seigneur'*, ed. by Loyal A. T. Gryting (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1952).

⁹⁶ Tony Hunt, 'Materia medica in MS London B.L. Add. 10289', *Medioevo Romanzo*, 13 (1988): 25-37.

aferma que mengier ageun vn pot de grains demil profite mout. *Quant* tu leueras de dormir tu doiz vn poi aler *et* tes membres estendre *et* ton chief pignier quer ce profite mout au chief *et* as membres. (fol. 125r)

These remedies are followed by another text by André de Coutances, *Le Roman des Français*, an anti-French satire that depicts King Arthur's defeat of Frolo and conquest of the French, to which a list of the twelve peers of France (in Latin) is appended by a different hand.⁹⁷ The presence of two items by André may reflect interest in this local author (Coutances is approximately 65km from Mont-Saint-Michel), whose works are not found in any other extant manuscript. Up to this point, the codex covers local history, Christian historiography and pseudo-factual content. Then we find the *FPA*, followed by the items on secular love.

The *FPA* thus facilitate the transition between the historical and factual content and the lessons on love and relationships that follow. These include the *Chanson d'Amors* by Robert de Blois, and the *fabliau Jonglet*, added after the transcription of the rest of the codex by a third scribe on the final folios. This copy of the *FPA* concludes with a unicum that emphasises the importance of the parent-child relationship. A father gives his inheritance to his daughters when they get married, only for them to mistreat him. However, he has the final word, reprimanding their greed in a letter composed to be read after his death. In the closing section of the framing dialogue, the son concludes the collection, praising the tale and its lesson:

Pere le fabel est mout boen
Mout oura cil *comme* prodoen
Boen est le fabel a oir
Mout se deit *qui* lot esioir
Grant prou *et* grant sens i conquest
Tel lorra *qui* de miez en ert

⁹⁷ The list of the twelve peers of France provides an appropriate appendix to the *Roman des Français*, as in the final section the author denigrates the habits of the French for over a hundred lines, and announces how his work 'shatters the spears of the Twelve Peers'. See David Crouch, 'The *Roman des Français* of Andrew de Coutances: Significance, Text and Translation', in *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900-1250: Essays for David Bates*, ed. by David Crouch and Kathleen Thompson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 175-98.

Trop puet pere amer son effant,
Garni se tiengne en son viuant. (fol. 172rb)

Rather than pondering the glory of heaven, this alternative epilogue links back to the *FPA*'s prologue and the symbiotic relationship of profit and pleasure. In this copy, the son has the final word and sums up the risks of overindulgent parenting. By concluding within the fictional framework of the father-son dialogue, the ending of the *FPA* leaves the audience contemplating relationships of this world rather than the glory of heaven. As a consequence, the ending forms a less controversial bridge to the amorous teachings put forth in the *Chanson d'Amors*.

Whereas the *Dit du corps* in the Augsburg codex builds on the epilogue's spiritual direction, the supplement to the *FPA* in MS Additional 10289 takes the teaching in a new direction. Robert de Blois' *Chanson d'Amors* presents itself as a comprehensive study of love, beneficial to lovers. This is reflected in the title added by a later reader in the blank space between the end of the *FPA* and start of the *Chanson*: 'Compendium amoris'.⁹⁸ In addition, Robert de Blois' name is absent from this copy, rendering the voice of the *Chanson* and its lessons anonymous. Written in octosyllabic rhyming couplets, it describes the paradoxical nature of love and its physical and emotional effects on lovers. This is brought to the fore in a 44-line anaphora on 'Amor' (ll. 143-86):

Amor fait pais, amor fait guerre,
Amor fait briser mainte serre,
Amor fait fere maint asaut,
Amor monte de bas en haut,
Amor en bas de haut descent,
Amor trop grant chose entrepren... (ll. 167-72)⁹⁹

In three manuscripts, it forms an epilogue to Robert's *Chastoiement des dames*.¹⁰⁰ Rather than accompany advice directed at women, in this codex it is appended to a work

⁹⁸ There are no original titles in the codex.

⁹⁹ Robert Reinsch edits the *Chanson* in 'Maître André de Coutances, *Le Roman de la résurrection de Jésus-Christ*. Bearbeitung des Evangeliums Nicodemi, nach der einzigen Londoner Hs. des 13. Jahrhunderts herausgegeben', *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*, 64 (1880): 161-94, pp. 167-70.

with a male addressee and the content does not contradict this. The projected lovers include some of the most worthy (male) figures: ‘Li duc et li conte et li rei, / Li plus vallant et li mellor’ (ll. 134-35). Yet, alongside his warnings about love’s ailments, the narrator acknowledges that if you ‘chastiez’ lovers, their passion will only increase (ll. 237-40). Thus whilst attempting to improve the behaviour of those in love by promoting courtliness and discretion, the narrator simultaneously underlines the impossibility of his task. Even ‘Li plus sage et li meuz apris’ (l. 1181) fall under its spell. In this respect, the caprices of love are impervious to *clergie*.¹⁰¹

The *Chanson*’s final couplet ‘Ci define d’amors le conte; / Qui mal lor veut, Dex li dont honte’ (ll. 347-48) is comically illustrated by the scabrous *fabliau* *Joulet*.¹⁰² In this scatological narrative, a mother employs a jongleur to educate her soon-to-be-married son, Robin, in the absence of a father figure. Whilst on their way to the wedding, Joulet encourages the naïve young man to eat many pears before advising him not to defecate on his wedding day. That evening, Robin’s wife notices her new husband’s discomfort and after realising Joulet’s influence, advises him to empty his bowels in the jongleur’s room. Robin then covers everything in faeces. In addition to his disgust, the jongleur suffers shame (and a subsequent beating) following his attempt to ruin the newlyweds’ first night together. The narrator concludes: ‘Segnors ce dit colin malet / Tel cuide *conchier* autrui / *Qui* assex miez *conchie* lui’ (ll. 418-20). This crude conclusion reveals the author and the moral. As a comic negative *exemplum*, *Joulet* provides a subversive reframing of the pedagogical exchange, underlining the risks of taking the wrong advice, as well as the potential

¹⁰⁰ Paris, BnF, f. fr. 24301 and fr. 837, and Paris, Ars., MS 3516.

¹⁰¹ In a similar light, Roberta Krueger highlights how the *Chastoiement des dames* (and *Chanson*), in the context of the *Roman de Beaudous*, ‘playfully undermines the entire moral structure introduced in the *Enseignement*, where the protection of female *honor* is the highest calling of the knight.’ See ‘Constructing Sexual Identities in the High Middle Ages: The Didactic Poetry of Robert de Blois’, *Paragraph*, 13.2 (1990): 105-31, p. 125.

¹⁰² NRCE, vol. II, no. 10, pp. 185-214.

consequences for the malicious teacher of proffering such advice.¹⁰³ Jouglet's Marcoulfian inversion of the well-intentioned paternal instruction of the *FPA* is counterbalanced by the guile of Robin's wife, resulting in the trope of the trickster tricked.

In the context of MS Additional 10289, the *FPA* are Janus-faced. They follow on from the exemplary function of the historiographical narratives that dominate the codex, and, at the same time, lead into the more worldly concerns of the final two items. Furthermore, this is facilitated by the unique epilogue to the *FPA*, which rather than contemplating heaven as in the other copies concludes with reflections on familial ties. The relationship to one's fellow man leads into the lessons on love in the *Chanson d'Amors* and *Jouglet*. Whilst reconfiguring the *FPA*'s paternal education, in both cases, the 'instruction' fails to equip the addressee with the tools to negotiate the amorous experience. Indeed, they are more likely to have entertained rather than educated the monks of Mont-Saint-Michel.

1.4.2 Love and Chivalry: Continuing the *Fables Pierre Aufons* in Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 7517

In the pocket-sized insular codex, nouv. acq. fr. 7517, the amorous teachings appended to the *FPA* take the form of a unique 'art d'aimer' that prolongs and imitates the father-son dialogue to incorporate the subjects of love and then chivalry. In this example, the *FPA* are the basis for the compilation of this small book. The first part comprises the *FPA* and the second its supplementary and imitative sequel, which contains (in its extant form) eleven narrative units and a dialogue on the

¹⁰³ In the same vein, Maddox described the *Roman de la Rose* as 'un recueil de *chastoiements*', in which the advice of the different 'teacher' figures (the *Vieille*, *Raison*, *Ami*) is ironic, nasty or ineffective, often ending with the rejection or challenge of the 'pupil'. See 'Avatars courtois', p. 168.

nature of love (see Appendix 1: Table 1.7).¹⁰⁴ The teachings and narratives combine love casuistry and antifeminist diatribes with typical romance scenarios, and even include cameo appearances by King Arthur and Kay. The final teaching moves from love to chivalry and recounts one long series of adventures undertaken by a knight. Presented in one column throughout, the two parts were written by the same hand, but the change in decoration suggests that they were not conceived as a single codex from the outset.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, folio 81 is added to the end of the last quire of the first unit, to complete the copying of the *FPA*.¹⁰⁶ It is only after finishing the *FPA* that the scribe-compiler decided to incorporate the sequel. Yet, the series of catchwords that transcend the two units, written in the hand of the scribe, indicate that they were intended to be bound together. Moreover, the manuscript remains in an oak medieval binding, which may well be the original encasement.

Beginning at the start of a new quire, a simple one-line-high red initial marks the start of the sequel, suggesting its supplementary status to the *FPA*'s epilogue and final 'Amen' at the bottom of folio 81v. Before resuming the father-son dialogue, the short prologue swiftly characterises the new topic:

Enpris ai cest ovre a fere
 E a summer e a chef trere;
 Des plusors amanz vus dirrai
 Ausi cum en escrit trové ai;
 Mes fort est granment travailler
 E pur benfet mal gré aver.
 Ne puit chaler: pur nul envye
 Mes benfez ne lerrai je mye,
 Kar je espeir de mun afere:
 N'est nul a ki ne dei[e] plere.
 Bon ensample puit hom aprendre

¹⁰⁴ The division of the textual units is based on Alfons Hilka's two articles: 'Plagiate in altfranzösischen Dichtungen', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur*, 47 (1924): 60-69; and 'Die anglonormannische Kompilation didaktisch-epischen Inhalts der Hs. Bibl. nat. nouv. acq. fr. 7517', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache in Literatur*, 47 (1924): 423-54.

¹⁰⁵ The *FPA* are decorated with red and blue pen-flourished initials and paragraph marks. By contrast, the sequel is decorated with simple painted initials, paragraph marks and freestyle marginal illustrations, all in red ink.

¹⁰⁶ On folio 80r-v, the scribe copies text in the bottom margins in an attempt to fit the last section of the *FPA*, before adding the additional leaf.

Ki a sage dit veut entendre.
'Fiz, si par [aucun] cas avyne
Ki tu deiz amer meschine...' (Hilka, 'Kompilation', ll. 1-18)

Whilst not explicitly referring to the *FPA*, there is a brief recapitulation of the work's marriage of pleasure and profit. This even includes the replication of the variant reading of a line from the prologue of the *FPA* particular to this copy ('N'est nul a ky ne dei[e] plaie,' (fol. 2r)). This is one of a number of parallels that link the content and composition of the two parts.

The copy of the *FPA* in nouv. acq. fr. 7517 and the unique sequel share idiosyncratic and interventionist methods of composition. Whilst it is possible that this codex was copied from two separate exemplars, the similarities identifiable in the two parts suggest that their production is linked. This copy of the *FPA* is one of the most abridged, with excisions of both the framing dialogue and narrative. In addition, the tales are uniquely re-ordered so that the collection begins with tales III and IV, and then XXII, XXIII, and XXIV, before the vulgate order resumes (see Appendix 1: Table 1.1). The composition of the sequel takes the 'cut-and-paste' technique to another level, through the incorporation and integration of material from at least two identified romances: the twelfth-century *Roman de Partonopeus de Blois* and the thirteenth-century *Hunbaut*.¹⁰⁷ Ranging from couplets to longer extracts, passages are selected and rearranged, regardless of the original voice or narrative context, and no explicit references remain that identify the source text. In light of the high degree of editorial *remaniement* in this copy of the *FPA* along with the compositional techniques in the unique sequel, we might infer that they were produced by the same individual, or at the very least, the sequel was composed as a response to this copy of the *FPA*. The redactor of the 'art d'aimer' is not the only

¹⁰⁷ See Hilka, 'Plagiate', and Olivier Collet, "'Armes et amour" ou "amour sans armes"? Un aspect négligé de la circulation et de la réception du *Roman de Partonopeus de Blois* au XIII^e siècle', *Mediaevalia*, 25.2 (2004): 93-110.

thirteenth-century author to place courtly and chivalric tales in a didactic framework. Indeed, in the exceptional BnF, f. fr. 24301 (see 2.2.1), Robert de Blois compiles all his didactic, narrative and religious works together in *Beandous* as part of the maternal pedagogical instruction of the eponymous hero. Yet, as Roberta Krueger highlights, ‘the “moral” frame fails to contain or control’ the transgressive meanings of the courtly narrative *Floris et Lyriopé*.¹⁰⁸ The analysis that follows thus explores the relationship between the courtly chivalric *exempla* and the lessons propounded, as well as the extent to which the ‘didactic’ framing represents a ‘serious’ moral agenda. I will argue that while playfully imitating the father-son framework, the second part of the codex proffers a Marcoulfian response to the *FPA*, all the while engaging with the discourse of chivalric romance.

The courtly vocabulary of the *FPA* recasts *clergie* rather than chivalry as the means of attaining glory. *Sens* rather than prowess is associated with honour, as elaborated in the *FPA*’s prologue. Significantly, the tales brought to the beginning of this copy give prominence to the concept of true nobility and the enduring value of wisdom, closely echoing the prologue.¹⁰⁹ In *De tribus versificatoribus* (III), the king judges the poets according to their literary merits, regardless of their social caste. He recounts the tale of the mule (*De mulo et vulpe*, IV), who when asked about his background bashfully mentions only his uncle, the horse. These tales are used to illustrate how true nobility derives from an individual’s personal virtues and abilities rather than the social class of their parents. The three tales (XXII, XXIII, XXIV) that then follow underline the transient nature of worldly goods and simultaneously warn against credulity.¹¹⁰ Combined, the five tales emphasise the enduring and authentic value of wisdom, which prevails regardless of status or wealth. The attempt

¹⁰⁸ Krueger, ‘Constructing’, p. 125.

¹⁰⁹ Foehr-Janssens, Bellon-Méguelle and Schaller Wu, ‘L’Honneur’, p. 158.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 159

to prolong the *FPA* with a sequel on love and chivalry thus risks contradicting the framework of ‘clerical honour’ and the emphasis on true nobility in this reordered copy.

Rather than being symbiotically associated as a source of honour, love and chivalry feature as discrete topics in the sequel. Moreover, their treatment in certain cases responds to and echoes the lessons set out in the *FPA*. This is evident from the first tale, which reconfigures the message of the first two tales (III and IV) in this reordered copy. The father advises against loving a woman ‘par haut parage’ (Hilka, ‘Kompilation’, l. 15) and to look instead for one who is ‘lele e sage’ (l. 16). He then recounts a tale about a knight with two lovers. The poor ‘pucele’ demonstrates great loyalty to the knight, whereas his rich lady deceives him. This indisputably supports the father’s conclusion that it is better to love a poor girl than a rich but disloyal lady:

Ceste ensample nus endoctrine:
Bon est amer povere meschine;
Meuç vaut amer povere pucele
Ke riche dame ke seit delele (Hilka, ‘Kompilation’, ll. 97-100)

The message is essentially the same as in the first tales of the *FPA* in this copy (III and IV), albeit applied to the context of amorous relationships. The first tale of the sequel thus transposes the question of true nobility from the judgement of poets to the evaluation of lovers.

In the same manner, the philosophers in tales XVI and XVII of the *FPA* are paralleled in the sequel by the figure of Kay. In the fifth tale, King Arthur calls on his seneschal to assess the case of the spurned knight. The narrative is supposed to illustrate the father’s dictum that women choose the wrong men. A knight arrives at Arthur’s court with a large entourage, which includes the lady he loves and her lowly lover. After presenting his story, the knight asks the court to judge his case. At King Arthur’s request, Kay decrees:

L'om deit arder le cul derere
A vostre dame d'un chaut fer,
E li vilein aut en enfer,
Qu'il ne deit aver amie. (Hilka, 'Kompilation', ll. 946-49)

In his role as arbitrator, Kay subverts the philosopher's serious judgements, and brings Renart's humorous guile from the forest into the context of the court.¹¹¹ The tone of his words and the general laughter of the court (ll. 958-59) render the scene Marcoufian. Whilst Kay's 'jugement' (l. 944) supports the father's 'lesson' in its punishment of the lady and her unfit suitor, the manner in which it concludes is far from serious, undermining the proposed didactic function. The spurned knight becomes the object of laughter, for his love of 'cele quil deshonneure' (l. 961).

The *décalage* between the narrative and its supposed moral is even more noticeable in the next unit, which also features Kay and King Arthur. The lesson that introduces the sixth exemplum echoes a teaching on courtly behaviour found in the thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman courtesy book *Urbain le Courtois*.¹¹² The father tells his son that he should always respond to the greeting of any man or woman (ll. 963-68). The narrative that follows, however, does little to promote the value of this lesson. King Arthur encounters two knights. One of them, whilst perfect in all other attributes, is immensely arrogant and instead of returning Arthur's greeting continues to sing a 'chançonette' (l. 994) while nonchalantly resting his right leg on his horse's neck. Believing he was unheard, Arthur makes a second, louder attempt to greet him. The knight angrily responds that he is not deaf and that he should have waited for him to finish his song (ll. 1012-21). Arthur concedes and accepts his argument. In the remainder of the episode, the knight tells Lancelot and Perceval about his love for a young lady and how she will grant him her affections if he succeeds at a tournament, of which he is reasonably confident. At this point, Kay cannot resist responding to

¹¹¹ Rather than in the court, the judgments that Renart makes in the *FPA* are outdoors.

¹¹² Rosamund Parsons, 'Anglo-Norman books of courtesy and nurture', *PMLA*, 44 (1929): 383-455.

the knight's boast, sarcastically asking him if in addition to his chivalric mastery, he is also likely to become 'apostele [...] de Rome' (l. 1100). The knight retorts that Kay's manner of speaking suggests that his profession should be earned 'Par fables e par burdes dire' (l. 1109). Following this slur, the sixth narrative abruptly ends with Kay's anger and Arthur's indifference. The concluding moral bears little relevance to the episode's elaboration:

Par cest chivaler ben avez oï
 Que de leger puit estre honi
 Celi ki resaluer ne deingne
 Kant hom li salue de grace humeine. (Hilka, 'Kompilation', ll. 1115-18)

Although the knight demonstrates his arrogance by ignoring Arthur's greeting, within the narrative context he is not condemned for his actions. Instead, he has the final word, which results in Kay's shame and anger. The *décalage* between the tale and its 'lesson' is thus ironic, in the same manner as the morals of many *fabliaux*. In this instance, the 'lesson' appears to function as a pretext for introducing the narrative content rather than the justification of its presence.

In the seventh exemplum, the relationship between the lesson and narrative has similar humorous implications. The father begins with the dictum that traditions and customs must be respected, a lesson he supports with the words of 'li sage':

En son escrist dist li sage:
 Celi ke defet bon usage
 De Deu mesime en est maudit,
 Ja n'en avera autre profit. (Hilka, 'Plagate', ll. 6-8)

This clerical introduction is then supposedly illustrated by the custom of the pavilion, an episode taken from *Hunbaut*, which constitutes the most significant case of appropriation in the sequel.¹¹³ The custom requires that every passing knight converse with the ladies in the pavilion, and if he does not, he must kiss the lady in charge before continuing on his way. In *Hunbaut*, Gawain acts as the guardian of this

¹¹³ See Hilka, 'Plagate'.

custom and chastises a knight (who turns out to be his brother) for not respecting it. In the treatise, little is changed apart from the omission of just over 50 lines, and the anonymisation of Gawain, who is referred to as ‘un chivaler’ and his brother, ‘Li aunterus’. Rather than become more didactic through this anonymisation, the new context accentuates the humour of the episode from *Hunbaut*.¹¹⁴ Moreover, the dubious nature of the ladies’ brazen custom comically contrasts with the clerically phrased teaching. At the end of this episode, the father immediately begins the next lesson on how women are deceptive and entrap men (ll. 1303-12). This casts an ironic glance back at the ladies’ salacious demands and the knight who chose to defend them.¹¹⁵ This juxtaposition further undermines the exemplary function of the preceding narrative.

The breakdown of the exemplary function of the narratives is most evident in the final section of the sequel, in which the focus turns to chivalry. The son tells his father that he has heard enough of love (ll. 2325-31) and wants to learn about the chivalric feats of the knight who featured in the preceding *exempla*. Significantly, the paradigmatic union of ‘armes’ and ‘amour’ is bisected, revealing ‘l’âpre résistance d’un *topos* littéraire’ and simultaneously its innovative reconfiguration.¹¹⁶ Yet in the same manner as the preceding love cases, this treatment of chivalry in isolation is not without humour. The knight is identified as ‘Ouwein’, ‘Le fiz de Noun’ (l. 2338).¹¹⁷ ‘Noun’ is the name of Anselot’s supernatural greyhound in *Partonopeu*, which implicitly connects the hero with a dog. The comic potential is even more charged when Ouwein is imprisoned by his host for coveting his beloved greyhound (ll. 2783-

¹¹⁴ The presence of Arthurian figures in the other *exempla* of the sequel undermines Lori Walter’s assertion that the removal of Arthurian names transforms ‘the passage into an even more didactic piece’. See Douglas Kelly et al., ‘Arthurian Verse Romance in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries’, in *The Arthur of the French: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval French and Occitan Literature*, ed. by Glyn S. Burgess and Karen Pratt (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006), pp. 393-460, p. 420.

¹¹⁵ The sequel as a whole is rife with misogynistic vitriol, especially tales 2 and 11.

¹¹⁶ Collet, ‘Armes et amour’, p. 103.

¹¹⁷ This Welsh variant of ‘Yvain’ could be seen to allude to Chrétien’s romance, in which the eponymous hero is criticised for being distracted by love and neglecting his chivalric duties.

98).¹¹⁸ Ouwein is only released from his incarceration when the host needs his help against the Saracens' attack. The extended series of battles that ensue end *in mediis rebus*.¹¹⁹ The incompleteness of this copy only accentuates the portrayal of arms as a fruitless endeavour.

Whilst the sequel promotes loyalty in love (3 and 4) and warns against the deceptive nature of women (2 and 8), as a whole the teachings and narratives on love and chivalry do not challenge the construction of 'clerical honour' in the *FPA*.¹²⁰ Indeed, in many cases there is a *décalage* between the tale and its moral. In the final teaching, the tales of chivalry appear futile, disconnected from the (conventionally) ennobling potential of love. There is little to contradict the *FPA*'s preference for brains over brawn. Thus as a response to the *FPA*, this unique 'art d'aimer' imitates the father-son dialogue of the collection, but rather than a 'didactic' treatise on love engages instead in a literary exercise that explores the motifs and ideology of chivalric romance.

This chapter has illustrated the different appropriations of and responses to the *FPA* suggested by its manuscripts. The framework of the story collection, the variety of its narratives, and the malleability of their reception are revealed to influence the diversity of its co-texts and the different functions of the *FPA* in multi-text codices. Each manuscript realigns the topos of instruction and entertainment so fundamental to the work (and its hypotext). Profit and pleasure are presented as symbiotic and intrinsic to the didactic function of the *FPA*. This relationship is rebalanced in the

¹¹⁸ Interestingly, no extracts from *Partonopeu* have been identified in the section on chivalry, only passages from *Hunbaut*. See Collet, 'Armes et amour'.

¹¹⁹ The final tale ends on the first page of the last quire, which suggests that the transcription (or composition) came to an abrupt end.

¹²⁰ See the numbering of the units in Appendix 1: Table 1.7.

varied manuscript contexts, affecting the reading experience of the *FPA*. The configurations of the *FPA*, especially the ending of the story collection, and the co-texts it is compiled with also alter their interdependency. The framework's dialogue form and dialectical approach to knowledge encourage the possibility of response and renegotiation.

In the case of fr. 12581, I demonstrated how the *FPA* is aligned with the other pedagogic exchanges and treatises in the manuscript, through the emphasis on its dialogue framework and didactic function. However, the re-baptised Marcoulfian tailor, 'Deduit' (XX), extracted from the *Chastoiment*, has the final word in a carnivalesque inversion at the end of this didactic compendium. By contrast, the religious *remaniement* of the *FPA* and the addendum of the *Dit du corps* in the Augsburg codex were shown to elicit a solemn and Solomonesque reading experience. The confrontation of the *FPA* with teachings on love in the final two manuscripts results in the deterioration or total breakdown of the pedagogic dialogue, and a movement towards pleasure over profit. The context most idiosyncratic to the *FPA* is the Pavia manuscript, in which the extended copy of the story collection and its co-texts elaborate on the exchange between *sens* and *engin*.

In addition to the five extant codices, there is a further known manuscript of the *FPA*: London, BL, MS Royal 16. E. VIII.¹²¹ This codex has been missing since the end of the nineteenth century. The available descriptions indicate its content and provenance, which reveal aspects in common with the five extant codices (see Appendix 1: Table 1.8).¹²² However, they do not provide a clear indication of the

¹²¹ See Harry L. D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts*, vol. 1 (London: Clowes and Sons, 1883), pp. 176-78, 625-26; and Francisque Michel, *Rapports à M. le Ministre de l'instruction publique sur les anciens monuments de l'histoire et de la littérature de la France qui se trouvent dans les bibliothèques de l'Angleterre et de l'Écosse* (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1838), pp. 23-28.

¹²² Like nouv. acq. fr. 7517, it originates in England. It has an item in common with MS Additional 10289 (*Vanjanse Nostre Seigneur*), and includes Latin and French like fr. 12581. The co-presence of *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* and the more didactic pieces recalls the interplay of comic and serious material in the Pavia codex.

physical features of the codex. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain what was copied and bound with the *FPA* in the Middle Ages. Without being able to experience the physical form of this codex, it is not possible to analyse in any depth the contextualisation of the *FPA*. Yet, the list of contents parallels the typically broad range of co-texts found in the corpus.

The extant codices underline the wide-ranging readership of this story collection, both geographically and socially. They range from the monastic readers and makers of the Norman monastery in Mont-Saint-Michel (MS Additional 10289) to the young noble reader interpellated by fr. 12581, via the clerical community from northeastern France invoked in the Pavia manuscript. This differentiates the dissemination of the *FPA* from the manuscripts of the *Chastoiment*, which share neither the broad geographical scope nor variety of contexts. As was noted, the insular redaction removes some of the Latin work's ambiguity and renders the extradiegetic exchange hierarchical and one-way. Its manuscripts are predominantly English, and include mainly religious and didactic material. The only exception is the large continental multi-text codex, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 19152, in which the *Chastoiment* is compiled with a significant variety of co-texts, including numerous *fabliaux*. Thus, the corpus largely reflects the more serious and learned nature of the insular redaction of the *Disciplina* and its appeal within the cultural *milieu* in which it was created.¹²³ Conversely, the *FPA*'s more playful approach could be seen to encourage its broader dissemination and more diverse contextualisations.

The dialogue framework of the *FPA* stabilises to a certain extent the *mouvance* of its tales, with the exception of the ending. Whilst a handful of unica are incorporated into the story collection, the narratives that most frequently extend the

¹²³ The English codices of the *Ysopet* reflect a similar tendency: this fable collection is compiled primarily with saints' lives and historiographical works, in contrast to the heterogeneous continental manuscripts. See chapter 3.

FPA originate in the *Chastoiement*. By contrast, in the next chapter, the iterative framework of the *Vie des Pères* results in multiple configurations, and its textual tradition is characterised by its extensibility. The hermeneutic framework of the *Vie des Pères* imposes a ‘fixed’ interpretation on the narratives, in contradistinction to the *scriptibilité* of the *FPA*. The penitential programme of the *Vie des Pères* sees the work compiled with primarily homogeneous co-texts. Therefore, the approach to the manuscript corpus will be from the perspective of the codicological presentation of this collection of pious tales, in order to demonstrate how the different textual and paratextual configurations of the *Vie des Pères* relate to the broader designs of the compiler and encourage different modes of reading.

Chapter 2

Model and Matrix of *mise en recueil*:

Manuscript Compilation and the *Vie des Pères*

The *Vie des Pères* is a title used by both medieval scribes and modern scholars to refer to a thirteenth-century collection of pious tales.¹ This highly popular work is found today in over fifty extant manuscripts, dating from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. Whereas the teachings and tales of the *Fables Pierre Aufons* (chapter 1) are cumulative and interrelated, the narratives of the *Vie des Pères* essentially promote the same penitential message through different characters and contexts. These repeated confessional journeys confer unity on the collection, whilst simultaneously facilitating the selection and rearrangement of the tales. In this way the *Vie des Pères* is also intrinsically extensible, which is epitomised by the identified augmentations of the collection. The earliest stage of the collection, known as the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, comprises forty-one (or possibly forty-two) tales composed by a single author.² A further thirty-two tales were added by one or two successors, and several ‘interpolations’ also circulate within the story collection, some of which feature more than once. The propensity to draw other material into its textual matrix, along with the multiple combinations and permutations of the tales, together emphasise the fluidity of what we call the *Vie des Pères*.

The mobility of the textual tradition, in addition to the presence of this story collection (or tales from it) in a plethora of multi-item codices, render the *Vie des Pères* a compelling work to consider in an investigation of manuscript compilation. Beginning with the manuscripts that feature large components of the *Vie des Pères*, I

¹ *La Vie des Pères*, ed. by Félix Lecoy, *SATF*, 3 vols (Paris: Picard, 1987, 1993 and 1999).

² On the components of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, see the discussion in section 2.1.1. For a list of the tales see Appendix 2: Table 2.1.

illustrate the different roles of this lengthy story collection in multi-item codices. The following section considers two codices in which the boundaries of the *Vie des Pères* are dissolved and its tales extended to form two unique compilations of primarily short verse narratives. Finally, I turn to the circulation of shorter series and individual tales to demonstrate how compilers appropriated these narratives and the effects of reading these tales in isolation from the story collection. Firstly, however, I will look more closely at the content, structure and framework of the *Vie des Pères*, in order to identify how the distinct characteristics of the story collection affect its manuscript transmission.

2.1 *Vie(s) des Pères*

The *Vie des Pères* is beginning to recapture critical attention after a period of relative neglect.³ The lack of recent scholarly interest in the story collection has been compared by Michel Zink to Caesarius of Heisterbach's critique of his *confrères*: 'Les critiques modernes sont comme ces mauvais moines: ils préfèrent les romans arthuriens aux récits édifiants, dont ils n'attendent que l'ennui.'⁴ Yet, whilst their message of conversion is orthodox, the well-structured narratives, the engaging psychological portrayal of the protagonists and their frequently debauched exploits are rich in intrigue and literary appeal, exemplified by the seduction of the proud

³ Whilst scholarly interest in the *Vie des Pères* can be traced back to Pierre Jean-Baptiste Legrand d'Aussy in the eighteenth century and Paul Meyer, Gaston Paris, and Edouard Schwan at the end of the nineteenth/beginning of the twentieth century, between Jozef Morawski's publications in the 1920s/30s and Jean-Charles Payen's *Le Motif du repentir dans la littérature française médiévale, des origines à 1230* (Geneva: Droz, 1967) there was a period of significant neglect. See Adrian P. Tudor, "The one that got away": The Case of the Old French *Vie des Pères*, *French Studies Bulletin*, 55 (1995): 11-15.

⁴ Michel Zink, *Poésie et conversion au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2003), pp. 203-50, p. 204. In the same vein, Simon Gaunt underlines the preference of modern scholars for 'the chivalric and courtly margins', *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 180. See also Busby, *Codex and Context*, pp. 195-96.

monk in the *Prévôt d'Aquilée* (32).⁵ In addition, the complex manuscript tradition is likely also to have had a repellent effect. Those brave enough to undertake the task have struggled to identify coherent manuscript families and several copies resist categorisation.⁶ Whether based on the variance of a single tale or the order of tales in the manuscripts, the findings are far from conclusive. In light of the complexity of the manuscript tradition as well as the significant length of the work, it is not surprising that previous editions only featured isolated tales.⁷ Thanks to Félix Lecoy's three-volume edition, the *Vie des Pères* is more accessible than ever and readers now have the opportunity to experience the tales as a collection. The impact of this edition is already evidenced by the publication of the first two monographs on the *Vie des Pères*.⁸

Lecoy's edition, however, represents a composite configuration of the *Vie des Pères* according to its formation in a single copy. He bases his edition on the contents of the *Vie des Pères* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1546, but not its copy of the text. This manuscript is the only one that features all seventy-four tales attributed to the story collection and its arrangement has been used as the basis for numbering the tales since the publication of Edouard Schwan's pioneering article.⁹ Instead of

⁵ See my analysis of this tale below (2.4.1).

⁶ See Edouard Schwan, 'La vie des anciens pères', *Romania*, 13 (1884): 233-63; P. D. Spencer-Ellis, 'La *Vie des Pères*: A Reappraisal of Manuscript Branches and Their Contents' (unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of Hull, 1986); and Fou, *dixième conte de la 'Vie des Pères', conte pieux du XIII^e siècle*, ed. by Jacques Chaurand, Publications romanes et françaises, 117 (Geneva: Droz, 1971).

⁷ For example, Fou and *Trois Contes français du XIII^e siècle tirés du recueil des 'Vies des pères'*: 'De l'ermite qui sala son pain', 'De l'ermite que le deable conchiâ du coc et de la geline', 'De Nostre Dame qui vint el prael ou la dame estoit', ed. by Göran Bornäs, *Études romanes de Lund*, 15 (Lund: Gleerup, 1968).

For a full list of the editions of individual tales see 'Appendix: Editions of the First, Second and Third *Vies*' in Adrian P. Tudor, *Tales of Vice and Virtue: The First Old French 'Vie des Pères'*, Faux Titre, 253 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), pp. 581-84.

⁸ In the earliest monograph, Adrian Tudor focuses on the forty-two tales considered to be the 'first' *Vie des Pères*: '[m]ost manuscripts contain the near entirety of the tales, allowing us as a result to consider the tales collectively as "a text" rather than a more arbitrary "collection".' *Tales*, p. 15. By contrast, Élisabeth Pinto-Mathieu engages with 'l'intégralité du corpus', reading the seventy-four tales of the longest known form of the collection (incorporating Lecoy's volume 3) as a work of multiple authorship. See *La 'Vie des Pères'. Genèse des contes religieux du XIII^e siècle*, Nouvelle bibliothèque du Moyen Âge, 91 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2009).

⁹ Three closely related Parisian manuscripts, which are codicologically linked to fr. 1546, contain more than seventy tales: Paris, Ars., MS 5204; The Hague, KB, MS 71 A 24; Brussels, BR, MS 9229-30 (see

reproducing the text from fr. 1546, which is dismissed as highly edited and abridged, Lecoy reproduces the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* from Paris, BnF, f. fr. 24301 (volumes I and II), with the addition of the debatable *Gueule du diable* (29) from Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1039. Fr. 24301 in many ways represents the editor’s ideal medieval copy: the narratives are numbered and presented in a highly systematic and rigorous manner, which accentuates the tripartite structure of each tale (see 2.2.1). Yet it is also exceptional, for no other copy shares the same contrived *mise en page*, which Lecoy replicates.¹⁰ The ‘continuations’ (volume III) are based on three different manuscripts: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1039 (43, 64-74, 45-50), fr. 1546 (51-63), and Paris, BnF, f. fr. 23111 (44). Lecoy ends up resorting to fr. 1546 because he has no better option for tales 51 to 63, which are absent from his favoured copy (fr. 1039).¹¹

Volume III thus represents a reconstitution of the extended *Vie des Pères*. Whilst the importance of this edition cannot be overplayed, its reification of the story collection recalls the way in which London, BL, MS Harley 978 has shaped the modern responses to the *Ysopet* and the *Lais* attributed to Marie de France (see chapter 3). In the context of this chapter, fr. 1546 will provide the basis for identifying the tales commonly associated with the *Vie des Pères*, but it will not define the integrity/completeness of the story collection. Indeed, if we accept that the extant codices are only a partial representation of what once circulated, the distinction between the thirty-two tales that continue and extend the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* and the so-called ‘interpolations’ is serendipitous. However, the interest of this study is not in deciphering their origins, but rather illustrating how the extensibility and malleability of the story collection play a role in the compilation of multi-text codices. At the

2.2.2). See Appendix 2: Table 2.1 for a list of the tales and their titles as coined by Gaston Paris, and first published in Schwan’s article.

¹⁰ For example, fr. 24301 is the only codex I have found in which the rubric is consistently placed after the prologue.

¹¹ The division between tales in volume III is evidently less systematised than the volumes of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*. Often the end of a tale includes the introduction to the next. The question of textual boundaries will be discussed below (2.2).

same time, the distinct characteristics of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* are identifiable in both the content of the tales and its manuscript dissemination.

2.1.1 The ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*

Composed by a single author before 1230, the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* has a distinctive voice and manuscript tradition.¹² Schwan was the first to distinguish the initial form of the *Vie des Pères* and the first to attempt to make sense of the complex web of textual witnesses.¹³ Thirty-seven of the fifty-plus extant manuscripts contain large parts of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* and twenty-five of these manuscripts contain the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* alone.¹⁴ Even after the various augmentations that occurred from the mid-thirteenth century onwards, the initial form of the story collection remained in circulation. The majority of the manuscripts that contain the *Vie des Pères* alone or with one or two additional short items represent the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* only. This group is primarily formed of fifteenth-century codices, which indicates that even after two hundred years, the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* had a distinct identity.¹⁵ There are, however, two elements of disputable origin: *Gueule du diable* (29) and the epilogue. In addition to fr. 1546, *Gueule du diable* (29) features only twice in the main group of fourteen manuscripts that share a similar order (see Appendix 2: Table 2.2). In the second largest group based on order, it is more prominent, occurring in seven of the twelve manuscripts, and in seven further copies of manuscripts from two sub-

¹² Lecoy ed., vol. I, p. XXIII. Tudor views the work as originating between 1215 and 1230, *Tales*, p. 15.

¹³ Since Schwan’s article, a number of manuscripts have been discovered.

¹⁴ In addition, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25439 presents the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* as a collection of 8 tales (see 2.4.1).

¹⁵ Only two fifteenth-century manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères* contain any tales from the identified continuations: Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 828 and Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS McClean 178.

groups.¹⁶ The authenticity of the epilogue found at the end of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* is even more questionable, found only in six codices.¹⁷ Lecoy suggests that ‘[l]a plupart des copies ont supprimé cette fin’.¹⁸ However, rather than the suppression of the authorial voice, it could represent a later redactor’s attempt to impose closure on the collection.

The iterative framework of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* is established through the prologue and epilogue that frame each tale, which are of considerable length for a short narrative.¹⁹ The distinct tripartite structure of the tales distinguishes the earliest form of the story collection from the later additions. These extradiegetic passages are characterised by the idiosyncratic voice of the narrator. Posited as a preacher before his flock, the narrator frequently addresses the audience as if giving a sermon: ‘Vos, genz, ki en pechiez vivez, / ceste hoste felon eschivez!’ (*Ave Maria* (14), ll. 7588-89).²⁰ The prologues begin with an aphorism, proverb, or biblical citation that lead into the teaching and function as a mnemonic device, enabling frequent readers to identify the tale. For example: ‘De fol avoir a grant talent / cil ki s’afole a escient...’ (*Renieur* (4), ll. 1195-96) or ‘Mauvés est qui ne gueredone / et ne desert ce q’en li done...’ (*Feuille de chou* (38), ll. 16348-49). The explicit hermeneutic function of the prologue is outlined by the narrator:

Cest prologue ci vos ai tret
por essample prendre en un fet
que ci emprés vos vuel conter. (*Crapaud* (16), ll. 7946-48)

¹⁶ The two manuscripts from the first group are Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1039 and Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1547. In fr. 1039, *Gueule du diable* (29) appears after the explicit for the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* at the start of a new quire and is followed by *Crucifix* (26) and eighteen tales from the continuations. Tudor agrees with Spencer-Ellis’s argument that *Gueule du diable* was not part of the ‘original’ collection, *Tales*, p.18. Lecoy, however, includes it in his edition of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, even though it is not in his base manuscript, fr. 24301.

¹⁷ The epilogue is followed by a prayer to the Virgin in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2187 and fr. 24301, and appears without the prayer in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1544, fr. 25440, fr. 24758, and Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Genevieve, MS 586. In fr. 1544 and fr. 25440, the epilogue follows ‘Interpolation C’ (see below) and is only 20 lines long.

¹⁸ Lecoy ed., vol. I, p. X, note 2.

¹⁹ The only exception is *Ave Maria* (14), which has a prologue of eight lines: ‘qar ci emprés vos vuel conter, / sanz prologue et sanz sermon fere, / un miracle d’un suen afere.’ (ll. 7407-09).

²⁰ Unless otherwise stated, all quotations are taken from Lecoy’s edition.

Similarly, the significative purpose of the ‘conte’ is emphasised in the epilogues, which are introduced in a comparable formulaic manner to the morals of the *Ysopet*: ‘Par cest conte savoir devez’ (*Sacristine* (13), l. 7376), ‘Par cest conte poez savoir’ (*Miserere* (7), l. 3073), and ‘Par cest conte ci vos devis’ (*Noël* (20), l. 10090). In the epilogue of *Queue* (15), the reader is impelled to look beyond the narrative and identify its deeper significance in order to assure his or her salvation: ‘Si ait chascuns de soi merci / et regart a cest conte ci, / non pas au conte, mes au sens’ (ll. 7894-96). Framed by the hermeneutic exigencies of the narrator, the individual tales form self-contained units. Yet whilst independent, they interrelate with each other, contributing to the collective function and framework of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*.

The prologue of *Fornication imitée* (1) introduces the first tale and characterises the collection. It is the most stable component of the textual tradition of the *Vie des Pères*, positioned at the head of the collection in (almost) all of the manuscripts.²¹ The content of *Fornication imitée* (1) dictates its position, and it is clear that it was intended to initiate the story collection. The predetermined order and design of the rest of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* is less certain. However, links can be identified between tales, and certain narratives travel together in the majority of extant copies, although not in the arrangement of fr. 1546.²² Rather than the audience (as in the other prologues),

Fornication imitee (1) begins with the direct address to God:

Aïde Dex! rois Jesucris,
Peres et Filz, Sainz Esperis,
Dex qui tout puez et tout creais,

²¹ See Appendix 2: Table 2.2. The beginning of the *Vie des Pères* in Oxford, Bodl., MS Douce 150 is mutilated and therefore it may also have been the first tale in this copy. In Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, MS 586, *Fornication imitée* (1) is the first tale of the *Vie des Pères* after Gautier de Coinci’s *Miracles Notre Dame*. However, four tales from the collection appear earlier in the codex.

²² For example, the prologue of *Haleine* (9) recalls the content of *Jardinier* (8). Tudor also notes the thematic links between the ‘first ten or so tales’, *Tales*, p. 378, note 26. Pinto-Mathieu notes a similar connection between *Haleine* (9) and *Fou* (10): ‘Cette proximité dans le recueil n’est peut-être pas de pur hasard. Les deux textes relatent l’itinéraire d’un renoncement qui, de la richesse et du pouvoir, conduit à la pauvreté, la solitude ou la folie assumée’, p. 476. The recurrent circulation of the tales numbered 24, 25, 32, 33, 34, 35 is discussed below (2.3.2 and 2.4.1).

qui en la Sainte Crois criais :
 'Je muir de soif', ce fu a dire
 que despit avoies et ire
 de cels qui en enfer estoient
 sanz ce ke forfet ne l'avoient
 de ton saint sanc les rachetas
 et de la prison les getas
 par ta grant debonairété. (ll. 1-11)

Christ's ultimate sacrifice for the sins of humankind and gift of everlasting life is elaborated in the next lines, which go back to Eve's original sin (ll. 12-22).²³ This sets up the central confessional theme of the collection, and the call to repent. The author then beseeches God to help 'us' to find the 'voie / de verité' (ll. 24-25), and to help him to complete his current task 'sanz mensonges et sanz mesdit' (l. 29). Like the author and protagonists, the reader is implicated in the same quest to find the 'right path'.²⁴ The narrator's (Christian) 'truth' distinguishes his work from that of more frivolous poets. Switching to address his audience directly, the narrator posits his composition as superior to the 'chansonetes, moz et flabiaz' (l. 35) of his profane *confrères*:

Or entendeiz et si orroiz
 tel chose ou aprendre porroiz.
 Une gent sont ki vont contant
 de cort a autre et vont trovant
 chansonetes, moz et flabiaz
 por gaaignier les biaz morsiaz.
 Mais je pris petit lor affaire;
 assez le porroient mielz faire,
 qu'en voir dire et en voir trover
 se porroit l'en mielx esprover
 ke il ne font en flaboier.
 En ce ne me vueil deloier,
 ainz dirai ce ke j'ai empris.
 Ja fable n'i mettrai en pris,
 ançoiz m'en irai per le voir.
 En voir vueil mettre mon savoir,
 car cil ki ment, por k'il le saiche,
 de bien se voide et mal ensaiche. (ll. 31-50)

²³ The *Vie des Pères* is commonly found with narratives on the Passion, see 2.2.

²⁴ On the motif of the 'right path' see Tudor, *Tales*, p. 40.

The literary practice associated with itinerant storytellers is aligned with material concerns ('por gaaignier les biaz morsiaz', l. 36). In the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, 'deduiz et beaus fableaus' (FPA, l. 73) are presented as part of the work's didactic agenda. In the 'first' *Vie des Pères*, such storytelling ('flaboier', l. 41) is denigrated. He authorises and legitimises his work through his portrayal of a higher 'truth' ('en voir dire et en voir trover', l. 39).

There is, however, a discrepancy between the characterisation of the first narrative and the content of the story collection as a whole. The narrator presents his subject matter as the pious figures of the Egyptian deserts, '[d]es peres anciens' (l. 51):

Cil controverent hermitages,
chascuns d'els mist son cors en gaiges,
en veillier et en geüner,
por les ames des cors sauver.
Foi ot en els et charité
et si i ot humilité.
Astinence n'obli je mie,
chascuns l'ot en sa compaignie.
Tant garderent pres penitance
k'il furent hors de la balance
del monde, ki est mout grevaine.
De mal n'ont garde ne de paine,
k'en paradis herbegié sont,
et c'est de cels dont je vos cont. (ll. 55-68)

These lines evoke the desert-dwelling ascetics of the *Vitæ Patrum*, and this is reflected in the titles allocated by scribes and compilers.²⁵ Yet whilst this introduction is appropriate to *Fornication imitée* (1) – one of the seven tales in the 'first' *Vie des Pères* that has direct affiliations with the *Vitæ Patrum* – the characterisation is misleading for the collection as a whole, which is formed of a varied range of stories.²⁶ They include popular legends such as *Juitel* (2), the tale about the Jewish boy who survives

²⁵ They most commonly feature variants of 'la vie des anciens peres', 'la vie des saints peres', and 'la vie des peres hermites'. See Appendix 2: Table 2.4 for the titles of the *Vie des Pères* in the multi-text codices.

²⁶ See 'Principales sources ou variantes de la *Vie des Pères*', Pinto-Mathieu, pp. 827-38. The diversity of the content is reflected in the rubric found in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25438: 'Cest de la uie des peres et des aucuns autres esemples' (fol. 1r).

being placed in a furnace by his father for cavorting with Christians. *Demi-ami* (39) is a reworking of the famous narrative found at the beginning of the *Disciplina clericalis*/*Fables Pierre Ansons, De dimidio amico* (I).²⁷ In the *Vie des Pères*, the tale is relocated to Rome and the friendship test is given an allegorical reading that emphasises the need to serve the Church, help the poor and love God. The geographical contexts of the tales include Antioch, Egypt and Jerusalem in the East as well as more familiar and local settings for the French audience, both named (e.g. Besançon in *Fou* (10)) and unspecified. In most cases, they are set within society rather than ‘hors de la balance / del monde’ (ll. 64-65), as suggested in *Fornication imitée* (1). Moreover, in addition to hermits, the tales feature clerics, nuns and named saints (Paulin and Thaïs) as protagonists, along with a variety of secular figures that range from a gardener to an empress. Most tales are described as a *conte*, *essample*, or *miracle*. However, *Image du diable* (41) is presented as a ‘chançon’ (l. 17796), and this accompanies the appropriation of the vocabulary of *fin’amor*: ‘li dex d’amors’ (l. 17792) here refers to the Christian God. In a similar manner, the lovelorn ‘borjoiz’ in *Renieur* (4) is portrayed suffering Ovidian love-sickness typical of romance (ll. 1347-50). Thus whilst denigrating those who tell ‘chansonetes, moz et flabiaz’, the author appropriates their idioms for his own agenda. The interplay with secular narrative is also evident in the first few lines of *Goliard* (28), which would not be out of place in a *fabliau*:

Jadis ot un clerc en Egypte
 Que l’en apeloit Lechefrite
 Por ce que lechieres estoit. (ll. 11938-40)

The similarities in character, setting and plot between these pious short tales and their comic counterparts have led critics to characterise the narratives of the *Vie des*

²⁷ However, the structure of the plot is closer to the version found in *Barlaam et Josaphat*. See Pinto-Mathieu, p. 435.

Pères as ‘counter-*fabliaux*’.²⁸ The story collection’s interaction with secular narratives, especially the comic variety, is evidenced in particular by two multi-text codices discussed below (2.3).

The discrepancy between the identity of the individual tale and of the story collection exemplifies the productive dynamic between the parts and the whole. The repetitive nature of the protagonists’ trajectory from sin to salvation, via confession, repentance and penitence is counterbalanced by the rich diversity of the narrative content. The multiplicity of the narratives thus provides the impetus to keep on reading, whilst each new example persistently reinforces the narrator’s sermon: ‘confess and you will reach heaven’. In this way, the story collection is infinitely extensible, and this aesthetic is evidenced by the numerous additions to the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*.

2.1.2 The Continuation(s) and Interpolations

The successful supplements to the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* have been classified as the ‘second’ and ‘third’ *Vie des Pères* since Schwan’s seminal article. However, these were not the only additions to the story collection in the manuscripts. A variety of other narratives augment the *Vie des Pères*, which have been classified by Jozef Morawski as ‘interpolations’.²⁹ The distinction between the accepted ‘continuations’ and those tales classified as ‘interpolations’ is not, however, entirely clear-cut.

The thirty-two tales of the ‘second’ and ‘third’ *Vie des Pères* are dated to between 1241 and 1252. Based on the order in fr. 1546, they are numbered as below:

‘first’ *Vie des Pères*: 1 to 42

²⁸ See Tudor, *Tales*, p. 17.

²⁹ See Jozef Morawski, ‘Mélanges de littérature pieuse: I. Les Miracles de Notre-Dame en vers français’, *Romania*, 61 (1935): 147-209.

‘second’ *Vie des Pères*: 43 to 44, 64 to 74, 45 to 50

‘third’ *Vie des Pères*: 51 to 63

Only fr. 1546 and the triplet Parisian manuscripts contain the tales of the ‘second’ and ‘third’ *Vie des Pères* in this order.³⁰ Göran Bornäs argues, following on a reexamination of the quires in fr. 1546, that there is in fact only a single continuation.³¹ Whether this is the case or not, these additions to the *Vie des Pères* underline the intrinsic extensibility of the story collection. Tales from the ‘second’ and ‘third’ *Vie des Pères* accompany the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* in twelve manuscripts and another three codices include individual tales from both the original collection and the continuations (see Appendix 2: Table 2.2). The continuations more frequently occur after the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*. However, the fifteenth-century codex, Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 828, is one of the few copies in which the tales are interspersed. In most cases there is no clear division between the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* and its continuations. Yet in two manuscripts their independence is marked.³²

In terms of their content, the majority of tales in the continuations are miracles of the Virgin, which in most cases do not replicate the lengthy prologues and epilogues of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*. However, the prologue to the tale almost always found at the start of the continuations, *Sel* (43), is of comparable length and suggests a new beginning whilst evoking the content of the prologue to *Fornication imitée* (1):³³

Aussi con li arbre verdissent,

³⁰ The three closely related codices are Paris, Ars., MS 5204, The Hague, KB, MS 71 A 24, and Brussels, BR, MS 9229-30. In Paris, Ars., MS 5204, there is no copy of *Image du diable* (71), and after an interpolated prayer, there is a supplementary copy of *Ave Maria* (57), which differs slightly from the earlier copy of the tale. See Spencer-Ellis, p. 108.

³¹ See Bornäs ed., pp. 10-11.

³² The two manuscripts are Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1039 and Paris, Ars., MS 3641. In the case of fr. 1039, the catalogue does not recognise the two tales from the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* that appear with the ‘second’ *Vie des Pères*, listing them all under the heading ‘Le Livre des miracles de Notre-Dame’. Busby may have been misled by the catalogue as he states that the codex ‘contains both *La vie des pères* and *Les miracles Nostre Dame*.’ *Codex and Context*, p. 207.

³³ The ‘second’ and ‘third’ appear without the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2094. In this context the prologue to *Sel* (43) functions as an introduction to this redaction of the *Vie des Pères*.

jetent lor foilles et florissent
 quant li tans vient dous et noviaus,
 que soés est et clers et biaux
 - par la souatume de li
 sont li arbre vert et folli –
 aussi de nous poons entendre,
 quant nous au bien nous volons prendre
 et repentir de nos meffais
 que nous avons conme fol fais
 par confiesse et par repentance;
 car bien saciés tot sans doutance,
 se penitance ne faisons,
 et nos jors et nos tans perdons. (ll. 19206-19)

The lyric springtime opening here compares the blossoming of the trees to finding salvation. The repeated emphasis on ‘penitance’ (ll. 19218, 19221, 19227) leads into the subject matter of the collection:

et prendre garde a ces estores,
 as sainteés et as memoires
 des anchiiens peres qui furent,
 qui bien firent chou que il durent,
 qui lors cors misent en grieté,
 en penitance et en durté
 es lieus sauvages et estranges. (ll. 19234-240)

In addition to the shared subject matter, the prologue echoes the suggestion that this first tale is one of many stories (‘ces estores’ l. 19234). It continues in the same vein as the prologue to *Fornication imitée* (1), describing the hardships of the holy fathers (‘saint pere’ l. 19254). Again there is a disjunction between the characterisation of the collection and its actual content, which like the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* is populated by a broad range of protagonists. At the end of the prologue to *Sel*, the narrator invokes God’s assistance. The ‘right path’ associated with ‘voir’ in the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* is replaced by ‘droit’: ‘a droit’ (l. 19264), ‘la droite sentense’ (l. 19269), and ‘en droit roumans’ (l. 19270). In this light, the prologue to *Sel* (43) imitates, adapts and continues its hypotext, the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, in a similar manner to the sequel to the *FPA* in Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 7517 (see 1.4.2).

As for the so-called ‘interpolations’, they vary from anonymous miracles and pious tales to items from another well-known thirteenth-century devotional work, Gautier de Coinci’s *Miracles Nostre Dame* (see Appendix 2: Table 2.3). Gautier’s exceptionally popular collection of miracles and songs are found today in a hundred and fourteen extant manuscripts, which is more than double the number of manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères*.³⁴ Before examining the relationship of the *Vie des Pères* and Gautier’s *Miracles*, however, I will address the anonymous interpolations. They range from single items to groups of miracles inserted into the series of tales from the *Vie des Pères* (see Appendix 2: Table 2.2).³⁵ Whereas the ‘second’ and ‘third’ *Vie des Pères* tend to feature after the ‘first’, the interpolations are commonly integrated into the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*. One of the longest interpolations, ‘B’, appears in the Paris triplets, within the series of tales from the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*. This group is characterised by the similar first lines of their narratives, which in all but two cases begin with the mention of ‘Dous Jhesucrist’. The paratextual presentation, however, does not differentiate these tales from the tales of the *Vie des Pères*. In the case of interpolation ‘C’, which appears in two closely related fourteenth-century manuscripts (Paris, BnF f. fr. 1544 and fr. 25440), miracles in prose as well as verse are incorporated at the end of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, but before the epilogue, which thus integrates the additional items into the framework of the collection.³⁶ Interpolation ‘A’ is closely linked with the ‘third’ *Vie des Pères*. The first two miracles from the group appear after *Nom de Marie* (60) in Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS McClean 178; and all thirteen appear after *Enfant sauvé* (61) in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2094. The latter contains no tales from the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, but almost all of the

³⁴ For a comprehensive list of the manuscripts, see *Gautier de Coinci: Miracles, Music and Manuscripts*, ed. by Kathy M. Krause and Alison Stones (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007).

³⁵ The interpolations are marked in red.

³⁶ Both these manuscripts contain the same order of tales and are very likely to have been copied from the same exemplar.

tales associated with the ‘second’ and ‘third’ *Vie des Pères*. In the narrator-compiler’s epilogue, the first two miracles from interpolation ‘A’ are identified as part of the series from the ‘second’ and ‘third’ *Vie des Pères* (which total twenty-eight): ‘xxx. miracles sont escrites / En ce livre *que granz que petites* / Et .x. autres *contes* ancore’ (fol. 171ra).³⁷ The presence of these two miracles with the items from the ‘third’ *Vie des Pères* in the Cambridge manuscript and their identification as part of the ‘livre’ formed of the ‘second’ and ‘third’ *Vie des Pères* in fr. 2094 troubles the definition of the *Vie des Pères* according to the contents of fr. 1546.

The interpolations formed of tales from Gautier’s *Miracles* underline the close relationship between these two collective works. Indeed, tales from the *Vie des Pères* also appear as part of the *Miracles* in the manuscripts of Gautier’s collection. In other cases, narratives from both works are extracted and re-compiled (see 2.4.2). When dislocated from the framework of the story collection, the discrete origins of the narratives are not evident. However, whereas the only apparently fixed element of the *Vie des Pères* is the first tale, Gautier’s collection had a clearly established structure that was often closely respected by scribes and compilers. Believed to have undergone several revisions, his carefully structured compilation forms two books, each preceded by a prologue and a series of seven songs.³⁸ In Arlette Ducrot-Granderye’s seminal study, she identifies seventeen manuscripts as containing all or almost all of the components of Books I and II, and an additional four manuscripts with complete versions of Book I. The order and structure of the collection in these seventeen manuscripts is remarkably similar, with only slight variations.³⁹ Sylvia Huot has argued that as a writer in a monastic setting Gautier would have had the

³⁷ There are actually eleven further miracles.

³⁸ A further three songs conclude the series of thirty-five miracles in the first book, and an epilogue and series of *saluts* and prayers complete the twenty-three miracles of second book. See Tony Hunt, *Miraculous Rhymes: The Writing of Gautier de Coinci* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2007), p. 188.

³⁹ See ‘I. *Manuscrits à peu près complets*’ in Arlette P. Ducrot-Granderye, *Études sur les ‘Miracles Nostre Dame’ de Gautier de Coinci* (Helsinki: Société de littérature finnoise, 1932), pp. 244-45.

opportunity to influence the manuscript production of his work.⁴⁰ His control over the early dissemination of the collection and his dominating authorial presence in the frequent self-references assured the establishment of his textual framework and legacy. Yet, the carefully crafted framework of the *Miracles Nostre Dame* did not stop scribes and compilers from extracting and selecting specific components of the collection to meet their needs, as suggested by the presence of his miracles in copies of the *Vie des Pères*. Several of Gautier's miracles have counterpart tales in the 'first' *Vie des Pères*. Yet the narrative material is not necessarily treated in the same way. Tudor argues that their differences relate to the intended audiences of each work: Gautier was addressing a more aristocratic public and potentially religious communities, whereas the 'first' *Vie des Pères* was directed towards a lay, urban middle-class audience.⁴¹ However, he does not explore the consequences of the collections appearing together in the same codices and for the same readership after their original composition. Some of the manuscript compilations which include the *Miracles* and the *Vie des Pères* as collective works will be discussed below (2.2.2).

From the 'first' version of the story collection to the extended forms, the *Vie des Pères* is characterised by the multiplicity of its witnesses. The discrete building blocks that make up the collection offer the possibility of multiple combinations and permutations. Each new transmission becomes a new opportunity for rearrangement and selection, and to construct and to undermine the integrity of the collection.

The remaining part of this chapter focuses on the importance of this collection to the compilation of multi-text codices. Owing to the significant length of the

⁴⁰ Huot, *From Song to Book*, p. 40.

⁴¹ See 'Telling the same tale? Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles de Nostre Dame* and the first *Vie des Pères*', in *Gautier de Coinci: Miracles, Music, and Manuscripts*, ed. by Kathy M. Krause and Alison Stones (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 301-30, p. 307.

collection, it might be supposed that the *Vie des Pères* would be more commonly transmitted in isolation. However, an investigation of the manuscript corpus reveals that only thirteen manuscripts transmit the *Vie des Pères* without any other material. Twenty-five manuscripts contain significant components of the *Vie des Pères* with other texts. Seven of these are dominated by the *Vie des Pères* and transmit only one to four supplementary items, and in each case these additional items appear after the *Vie des Pères*.⁴² Another two codices contain only the *Vie des Pères* and Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles Nostre Dame*.⁴³ The remaining sixteen manuscripts are of principal interest to this chapter as they contain significant components of the collection and five or more items.⁴⁴ These multi-text codices were all produced in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with the exception of the fifteenth-century codex, Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 828. These manuscripts are analysed below according to the position of the *Vie des Pères* in the codex. Two particularly interesting examples from this group are analysed in detail because of the way the boundaries of the story collection are broken down. In the final part of this chapter, I turn to the eleven codices that transmit either shorter series of *Vie des Pères* narratives or tales in isolation and the implications of extraction on their reception.⁴⁵

⁴² Only two of the seven codices were made in the fifteenth century.

⁴³ This information is based on the limited descriptions I have found of Neuchâtel, Bib. Pub. MS 4816. G. A. Matile provides a list of the rubrics, see 'Contes du XIIe siècle, découverts à Neuchâtel', *Revue Suisse*, 2 (1839): 246-50.

⁴⁴ I have not counted tales integrated into the *Vie des Pères* from Gautier's *Miracles* or the interpolations as individual items. One exception to the rule of the *Vie des Pères* with five or more items is fr. 1546, which includes the *Vie des Pères* and four additional discrete works: Book I of Gautier's *Miracles*, two prose works on religious doctrine (one of which includes the *Dialogue entre le père et le fils*, cf. the discussion of fr. 12581 in 1.2), and a copy of the *Vie de saint Julien* (added in the fourteenth century).

⁴⁵ This includes Geneva, Bibliothèque publique et universitaire, MS 179bis, which has only recently been discovered to include *Merlot* (42) from the *Vie des Pères*. I thank Rachel Sweet for bringing this to my attention. I have not included the fragments or the Italian version (Bologna, BU MS 2651) in this short review of the manuscript contexts. I am not aware of any other copies of the Italian version.

2.2 The *Vie des Pères* in Multi-Text Codices: Boundaries in Compilation

In this brief overview, I will illustrate how the textual and paratextual contextualisations of the *Vie des Pères* and its co-texts nuance the reading experience of the story collection and the codex. Whilst the content of the codices is far more homogenous than the manuscripts of either the *Fables Pierre Aufons* (chapter 1) or the *Ysopet* (chapter 3), the negotiation of the boundaries of the story collection is remarkably diverse. The content, organisation and presentation of the *Vie des Pères* fluctuate, revealing a two-way dynamic: on the one hand, a desire to mark the integrity of the story collection, and on the other, an openness to augmentation/aesthetic of extensibility. The sixteen multi-text codices with significant components of the *Vie des Pères* divide equally into those that feature the *Vie des Pères* at the beginning of the codex, and the compilations in which the story collection plays a more contingent role. By examining the corpus according to the placement of the *Vie des Pères*, I will demonstrate its relative status and function in each context.

2.2.1 Beginning with the *Vie des Pères*

In the eight multi-text codices that begin with the *Vie des Pères*, the collection of pious tales sets the agenda of the codex.⁴⁶ In two distinct cases, the unidentified tales of the *Vie des Pères* form the basis of a longer series of items, and this compilatory phenomenon will be discussed in more detail in the next section (2.3). Here I will focus instead on the manuscripts in which the identity of the *Vie des Pères* plays a prominent role. On the first page of three codices, the *Vie des Pères* is introduced by a

⁴⁶ I have not, however, had the opportunity to verify whether the *Vie des Pères* was bound with the second unit in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25338 during the Middle Ages, and therefore will not be discussing this codex.

rubric and an illustration. Whilst the rubrics are almost identical (see Appendix 2: Table 2.4), the images diverge significantly, and I will demonstrate how the different iconographic accompaniments to the *Vie des Pères* reflect and shape the broader dynamics of each manuscript. In other cases, the specific paratextual presentation and division of the *Vie des Pères* encourages particular modes of reading, and I will suggest that this corresponds to the intended readership of the codex.

Of the three manuscripts with illustrations on the first page, two include images that refer to the narrative content of *Fornication imitée* (1), which thus substantiates its portrayal of the *Vie des Pères* as a collection of tales on the lives ‘[d]es peres anciens’ (l. 51). This includes Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1546, which contains the ‘definitive’ copy of the *Vie des Pères*. The miniature depicts two figures with the baskets made and sold by the hermits in *Fornication imitée* (1).⁴⁷ Due to wear and tear, it is difficult to distinguish whether the figures represent the two hermits or the hermit and his seductress. The basket-making ascetic(s) along with the title ‘la uie des peres’ characterise what will follow according to the prologue and narrative of the first tale. Moreover, this is the only multi-text codex in which Gautier’s *Miracles* are secondary to the *Vie des Pères*. Two prose texts on Christian doctrine separate the two story collections. Whilst the copy of the *Vie des Pères* is extensive, only a series of miracles from Gautier’s Book I are compiled. Furthermore, rather than a miniature, as found at the start of the *Vie des Pères*, the prologue is marked by an elaborately decorated initial.⁴⁸ This hierarchisation of the *Vie des Pères* over the *Miracles* is unusual

⁴⁷ It is the only miniature in the codex apart from the one added to the final item *Vie de saint Julien* in the fourteenth century. The artist responsible for this illustration has been connected with Ars., MS 5204, one of the three Parisian codices produced by Thomas de Maubeuge discussed below (2.2.2). See Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, *Manuscripts and their Makers: Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris, 1200-1500*, 2 vols (Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2000), vol. I, p. 191.

⁴⁸ Large red and blue puzzle initials are used to mark the start of each tale from the *Vie des Pères* and the individual miracles in Gautier’s collection. This style of initial is ubiquitous in the manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères*, and also of Gautier’s *Miracles*, especially in the thirteenth century.

in the corpus.⁴⁹ In a compilation of works characterised by the illustration of the two hermits at the start of the codex, Gautier's Book I thus functions as a supplementary series of examples.

The image that introduces the *Vie des Pères* in Berkeley, Bancroft Library, MS 106 (olim Philips 3643) refers to the first narrative at the same time as invoking the principles of organisation underlying the compilation of the manuscript as a whole.⁵⁰ In this expansive thirteenth-century compilation, a large historiated initial, divided into three compartments, precedes the story collection (fig. II, 1). The top tier depicts the crucifixion. The middle and bottom tiers portray the two basket-making hermits from *Fornication imitée* (1) and then the seduction of one of them. The three tiers thus combine the implicit reference to the crucifixion in the prologue to the first tale as well as its narrative content. As with the other two manuscripts, this copy of the *Vie des Pères* is one of the most expansive, including forty-one tales from the 'first' and nineteen tales from the 'second' *Vie des Pères*. Moreover, the boundaries of this extensive copy are unmarked: five additional short items follow and extend the *Vie des Pères*. One of these is the *Passion Dieu* (vol. I, fols 105vc-111rb), which offers a pertinent elaboration of the illustration on the manuscript's first page.⁵¹ Furthermore, the focus on the crucifixion also foreshadows the beginning of the *Estoire del Saint Graal* (vol. I, fols 117ra-191vb), which features another image of Christ on the cross (f. 119va).⁵² The prologue to *Fornication imitée* (1) and visual accompaniment of the crucifixion in Bancroft Library, MS 106 thus foreground the importance of Christ's

⁴⁹ On the manuscripts in which the *Vie des Pères* follows the *Miracles*, see 2.2.2 below.

⁵⁰ The codex is now bound as two volumes. See Appendix 2: Table 2.4 for a link to a description and digital images of the manuscript. See also Gehrke, pp. 86-123, and Ducrot-Granderye, p. 109.

⁵¹ See Jean Bonnard, *Les Traductions de la Bible en vers français au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1884). This version of the passion is one of the *Vie des Pères*'s most popular co-texts, found in four other multi-text manuscripts: Paris, Ars., MSS 3527 and 5204; Paris, BnF, f. fr. 20040 and fr. 24301.

⁵² Whilst manuscripts of the *Estoire* often feature images of the Crucifixion with the account of Joseph of Arimathea collecting Christ's blood in the Grail, he actually acquires the blood at the Entombment. See Alison Stones, 'The Lancelot-Graal Project', <<http://www.lancelot-project.pitt.edu/lancelot-project.html>> [accessed 5 September 2014].

ultimate sacrifice not only to the confessional agenda of the *Vie des Pères*, but also to the codex as a whole.



Figure II, 1: Berkeley, Bancroft Library, MS 106, *Vie des Pères* (fol. 1ra)

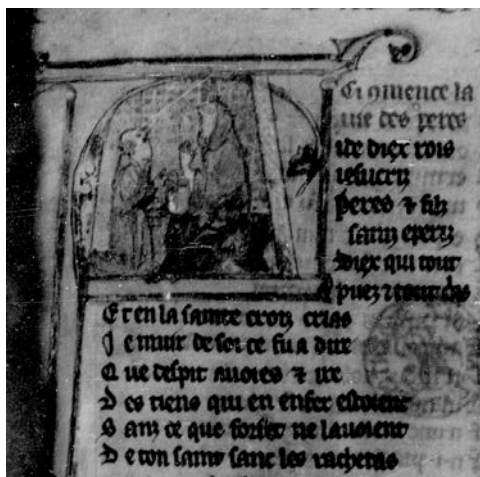


Figure II, 2: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 23111, *Vie des Pères* (fol. 2ra)

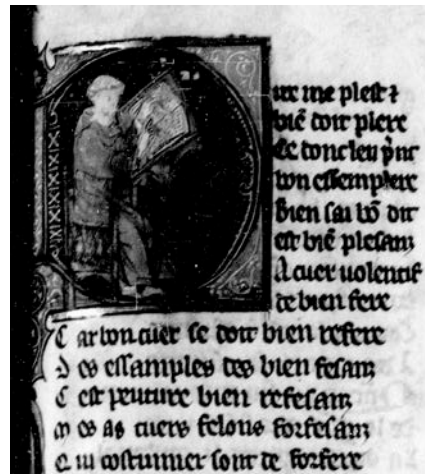


Figure II, 3: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 23111, Renclus de Molliens, *Carité* (fol. 216ra)

Like the illustration in Bancroft Library, MS 106, the historiated initial that precedes the *Vie des Pères* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 23111 has implications beyond *Fornication imitée* (1). Rather than Christ, this illustration portrays a bearded monk in a hooded robe, sitting before a younger tonsured figure (fig. II, 2). The rubric that introduces *Fornication imitée* (1) does not appear until the start of the narrative content, which thus distinguishes the prologue and the illustration as a general introduction to the *Vie des Pères* and to the codex. The exchange pictured is pedagogic and the figures are monastic, thus characterising the material as a religious education. The only other illustration in fr. 23111 occurs at the beginning of the Renclus de Molliens's dyad, *Carité* (fols 216ra-235ra) and *Miserere* (fols 235rb-256vb). The tonsured and bearded figure in a monastic gown is pictured sitting at a lectern in the act of composition (fig. II, 3). It does not include the cell that frequently distinguishes the other author portraits of the Renclus.⁵³ Rather this historiated initial does not individualise the author, but represents another monastic setting and protagonist.⁵⁴ In the same manner, the distinct authorship of Gautier de Coinci is also suppressed in the codex. It is not identified in the short series from the *Miracles* that follows the Renclus' dyad. Moreover, three miracles from Gautier's collection are also integrated into the *Vie des Pères* ('Interpolation E'), contributing to one of the most expansive copies of the story collection.⁵⁵ Gautier's voice is thus subsumed into the generalised monastic author-teacher figure constructed throughout the codex. In fr. 23111, the relative integrity or authorship of the respective works is less important than the didactic function of the catalogue of religious teachings, which begin with the examples of the 'vie des peres' (fol. 2ra).

⁵³ On the manuscripts of the Renclus, see Van Hamel ed., pp. VII-XXXVI.

⁵⁴ Indeed, his authorship is only attributed in the paratext after *Carité*: 'Ci finent les uers au reclus de moulaines' (fol. 235ra). This simultaneously disassociates the author from *Miserere*, which immediately follows.

⁵⁵ Additionally, the inclusion of the vernacular prose collection of the same name further 'continues' the verse *Vie des Pères*. Echoing the title at the head of the codex, its rubric states 'Ci commence la vie des peres en prose' (fol. 156ra).

The strict paratextual delineation of the internal and external boundaries of the *Vie des Pères* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 24301 reflects the broader didactic goals of this remarkable manuscript. Given the extraordinarily systematised presentation of the tales, it is no wonder Lecoy used fr. 24301 for his base manuscript. The compiler accentuates the internal boundaries of each tale: a large red and blue puzzle initial introduces the prologue; a rubric and a two-line-high red or blue pen-flourished initial mark the start of the narrative; and a second pen-flourished initial highlights the first line of the epilogue. In addition, *pieds de mouche* are used throughout the tales, in the places where smaller pen-flourished initials are found in other manuscripts.⁵⁶ The tales are also numbered with red roman numerals, in the margin next to the large puzzle initials.⁵⁷ These paratextual features uniquely configure the reading experience of the story collection. Rather than the ‘titillation’ of the titles, the reader experiences first the sermonising message of the prologue.⁵⁸ Indeed, as Busby rightly notes, this ‘underlines the moralizing nature of the tales’.⁵⁹ In contrast to the manuscripts of the *Ysopet*, in which the moral is consistently marked by a pen-flourished initial or *piéd de mouche* (see chapter 3), the delineation of the epilogue is exceptional in the manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères*, in which initials are used sporadically and rarely placed in the same position in the different manuscripts. In fr. 24301, the delineation of the sermonising prologues and epilogues emphasises their hermeneutic role in the reception of the narrative material.⁶⁰

The explicit internal division of each tale is paralleled in the delineation of the external boundaries of the *Vie des Pères* in fr. 24301. It is the only multi-text codex to feature the concluding *Ave Maria* and ‘authorial’ epilogue. These passages bring

⁵⁶ Busby, *Codex and Context*, p. 197.

⁵⁷ There is an error in the numbering of tales: the numbers go straight from 39 to 41, missing 40. The numbering goes up to 42 when there are only 41 tales.

⁵⁸ For Busby, the function of the *Vie des Pères* rubrics is to titillate the reader, associating the tales with their bawdier counterparts, the *fabliaux*. *Codex and Context*, p. 201.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁶⁰ At the same time, it is possible for the savvy reader to select only narrative content...

closure to the inherently extensible series of tales and individualise the sermonising narratorial voice. In the context of fr. 24301, the narrator of the *Vie des Pères* becomes one of many voices of wisdom, such as the wise men in *Dolopathos* and the mother who educates the eponymous young hero in *Beaudous*.⁶¹ Whereas the former contains several interpolated narratives, the collected didactic and narrative works by Robert de Blois form the maternal advice in the latter.⁶² These two works share the composite form and didactic function of the *Vie des Pères*. The carefully structured paratextual programme of fr. 24301 highlights both the parts and the whole of each work, and in particular the iterative and uttered moments. The hierarchy of initials is epitomised by the presentation of the boundaries of the individual *Vie des Pères* tales.

Paris, BnF, f. fr. 20040 provides another example that illustrates how the boundaries of the *Vie des Pères* encourage different modes of reading, and how this might relate to a particular readership. Rather than a young noble, the evidence suggests that the readers and users of this less refined composite codex may have been based in a religious setting. Fr. 20040 contains some material closely related to the contents of fr. 24301 (*Passion Dieu* and the prose *Roman des Sept Sages* (version A)), but also short moral texts, a sermon and medical items, including a fragment of the *Epistola ad Alexandrum* in French.⁶³ The items after the *Vie des Pères* are copied by different scribes, in distinct gatherings. However, the medieval foliation establishes that all the texts were compiled together by the fourteenth century.⁶⁴ In addition, a table of contents was added for the *Vie des Pères* alone before the addition of folio

⁶¹ 'Biaudoux' de Robert de Blois, ed. and trans. by Jacques Charles Lemaire (Liège: Éditions de l'Université de Liège, 2008).

⁶² See Mikhaïlova-Makarius on the possibility that Robert himself compiled the codex, *L'École du roman*, pp. 336-54

⁶³ See Ilaria Zamuna Candiani, 'Les versions françaises de l'Epistola ad Alexandrum de dieta servanda: mise au point' in *La Traduction vers le moyen français, 2e Colloque de l'Association Internationale pour l'Étude du Moyen Français (Université de Poitiers-CESCM, 27-29 avril 2006)*, ed. by Claudio Galderisi and Cinzia Pignatelli (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 165-84. A slightly different copy of the same version is found in London, BL, MS Additional 10289 (fol. 125r-v) (see 1.4.1).

⁶⁴ A fourteenth-century reader added roman numerals in the outer margin of each recto page.

numbers.⁶⁵ Corresponding folio numbers were then noted next to each title, enabling the navigation of the story collection.

The addition of this table of contents, however, changes the reading experience of the *Vie des Pères* encouraged in this copy. As in several other codices, large red and blue puzzle initials delineate the individual tales. However, the positioning of these initials creates different boundaries from those articulated in the other copies. This begins on the first page, on which a large puzzle initial marks the start of the 'general' prologue and another introduces the start of the narrative content of *Fornication imitée* (1). The majority of the subsequent puzzle initials also coincide with the first line of the narrative. In some cases, the prologues are attached to the end of the preceding tale, and in others they are omitted completely.⁶⁶ The end of one paratextual unit thus builds up to the next, creating a more continuous reading experience. Moreover, there are no rubrics that identify the different tales, making them all appear interchangeable. The addition of a table of contents thus subverts the original mode of reading into a more discontinuous one, which allows the reader to select tales individually. If the sermons in the codex indicate the potential users of the manuscript, then the identification of specific tales was more of a necessity.

By the fourteenth century, tables of contents were frequently found in the manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères*, bringing another level of paratextual framing to the story collection and its co-texts, as will be illustrated below.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Rather than in the right margin as on the other pages, the foliator places the number in the top right corner of the page with the table of contents (fol. 104r), which indicates that the foliation was added after the table.

⁶⁶ This is the only instance of such subdivision that I have noted in the multi-text codices of the 'first' *Vie des Pères*. In fr. 1039, the short prologues of a number of tales from the 'second' *Vie des Pères* also feature at the end of the preceding tale.

⁶⁷ There is evidence of the independent circulation of lists of rubrics for the *Vie des Pères* on rolls in the fourteenth century. See Mary A. Rouse and Richard Hunter Rouse, 'Some Assembly Required: Rubric Lists and Other Separable Elements in Fourteenth-Century Parisian Book Production', in *Li*

2.2.2 The *Vie des Pères* as Contingent Collection

The manuscripts in which the *Vie des Pères* plays a secondary role are neatly divided into those in which it follows large components of Gautier's *Miracles* and those in which it does not. In the former, tables of contents play an important role in delineating each collective work, as well as integrating additional elements into their textual matrices. The remaining four codices represent a miscellaneous group, in which the *Vie des Pères* is unidentified in all but one case. In these manuscripts, the distinct identity and agenda of the *Vie des Pères* are of less importance than the stock of examples the collection offers.

In the earliest of the four codices in which the *Vie des Pères* follows the *Miracles*, separate tables of contents precede the different collective works. Paris, Ars., MSS 3517 and 3518, once formed a single compilation produced at the end of the thirteenth century.⁶⁸ The principal components are a 'cycle' of texts on the Virgin, Books I and II of Gautier's *Miracles*, and lastly, the *Vie des Pères*. The additional material on the Virgin has been tentatively attributed to Gautier de Coinci and postulated as a further *remaniement* of the *Miracles*.⁶⁹ In this regard, the *Vie des Pères* plays a secondary role to Gautier's grand *œuvre*.⁷⁰ Three distinct tables of contents precede the two books of Gautier's *Miracles* and the 'first' *Vie des Pères*. The numbering of the items restarts in each table, thus forming three series. However, the consistent use of red and blue puzzle initials and rubrics project unity within and

premerains vers': Essays in Honor of Keith Busby, ed. by Catherine M. Jones and Logan E. Whalen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011), pp. 405-16.

⁶⁸ See Ducrot-Granderye, pp. 41-46.

⁶⁹ These include a *Genealogie Nostre Dame en romanz* (fols 5ra-6vb) accompanied by a full-page illustration (fol. 7r). After Book I of the *Miracles*, there are four further narratives: *Nativité Nostre Dame* (fols 105ra-110va), *Nativité Jhesucrist* (fols 110va-121ra), *Assumption Nostre Dame* (fols 121ra-131va), *La Nativité saint Jehan Baptistre et li fait Jhesucrist* (fols 131va-140ra). See Olivier Collet, 'L'Œuvre en contexte: la place de Gautier de Coinci dans les recueils cycliques des *Miracles de Nostre Dame*', in *Gautier de Coinci: Miracles, Music, and Manuscripts*, ed. by Kathy M. Krause and Alison Stones, *Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe*, 13 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006); see also his 'Gautier de Coinci: Les Œuvres d'attribution incertaine', *Romania*, 121 (2003): 43-98.

⁷⁰ Indeed, the only illustrations in the codex accompany the *Genealogie* and the *Miracles*, including an author portrait on folio 140(bis)r.

across the individual ‘books’ of the compilation. The tables for Gautier’s *Miracles* are placed after the general prologue and series of *chansons* that precede the miracles in each book. Book I has both a list of the miracles in Latin and a French table of contents. However, the French table appears to have been made for the purpose of this copy.⁷¹ The table for Book II lists four pieces not understood to be by Gautier, which occur after the items from Book II (in Ars., MS 3518): *Eructavit*,⁷² *Del Tumbeor Nostre Dame*,⁷³ and two further miracles. Whilst the first two items are frequently compiled in manuscripts of the *Miracles*, the final two miracles are unica that resemble narratives in Gautier’s collection and the *Vie des Pères*.⁷⁴ The compiler is thus more interested in the expansion of the collection than the duplication of analogue tales. The table for the *Vie des Pères* also includes items not otherwise considered part of the story collection: ‘Dun hermite qui fu escuiers En senfanche et molt soumellex’ (fols 191va-193va), known as ‘Interpolation G’; and *De l’Hermite et del Jogleour* (fols 199vb-203vb).⁷⁵ In light of the paratextual integration and the similarities in the content and protagonists of these two pious tales and the *Vie des Pères*, there is nothing to undermine their role in the story collection.⁷⁶ Whilst emphasising the integrity of each ‘book’, the tables of contents in Ars., MSS 3517

⁷¹ The Latin list appears after the prologue and *chansons* of Book I of the *Miracles* (fol. 12r-v). Only the French table is introduced by a rubric, which occurs after another series of songs: ‘Ues chi en brieue les capitax du premier liure’ (fol. 14v). The French table is a more accurate description of the contents, in which I Mir 22 occurs after I Mir 21 and I Mir 23 (numbered XII and XIII) and I Mir 42 is divided into two miracles (numbered XXXIII, fols 87va-90rb, and XXXIII, fols 90rb-91rb). Book II does not have a Latin list.

⁷² This paraphrase of psalm 44 has also been linked to the Gautier corpus, see Collet, ‘L’Œuvre en contexte’, pp. 26-27, note 8.

⁷³ *Vierge et merveille. Les Miracles de Notre-Dame narratifs au Moyen Âge*, ed. by Pierre Kunstmann (Paris: Union Générale d’Éditions, 1981), pp. 142-77. This miracle frequently features in two further manuscripts which feature tales from the *Miracles* and the *Vie des Pères*: Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Château, MS 475 (see 2.3.2) and Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1807 (see 2.4.3).

⁷⁴ The second miracle recounts the legend of the *sacristine*. On the versions of this legend in the *Miracles* and *Vie des Pères* see Tudor, ‘Telling the same tale?’.

⁷⁵ *De l’Hermite et del Jogleour: A Thirteenth[-]Century ‘Conte Pieux’. Text, with Introduction and Notes, Including a Study of the Poem’s Relationship to ‘Del Tumbeor Nostre Dame’ and ‘Del Chevalier au Barisel’*, ed. by Louis Allen (Paris: Salsona, 1925). This item is also mistakenly listed at the end of table of contents for Book II of the *Miracles*.

⁷⁶ Moreover, the source of *De l’Hermite et del Jogleour* further encourages their approximation: ‘In uita patrum .i. haut liure / ki les bons essamples nous liure / Nous raconte dun saint hermite’ (fol. 199vb).

and 3518 problematise the boundaries of each story collection as they are defined in modern scholarship, and present a broadened consensus of each work.

Other items do not feature in the table of contents, but nonetheless extend the respective story collections through their compatible content, which is emphasised by their paratextual presentation. The Renclus de Molliens's *Miserere* (98va-116vb) is the final item in the series after Book II of the *Miracles*. In this copy, the text is divided into two parts, and the rubric for the second part emphasises its narrative content in an echo of the preceding miracles: 'Dun moine qui reprenoit ses compaignons pour ce quil cantoient haut' (fol. 115ra). The paratextual presentation and subdivision thus aligns it with the preceding *Miracles*. In a similar manner, the final two items in the codex are not included in the table for the *Vie des Pères*, but share close affinities with its tales.⁷⁷ Both the *Vie de saint Jehan Paulus* (fols 203vb-216ra)⁷⁸ and the *Vie de saint Jean Bouche d'or* (fols 216ra-221va)⁷⁹ cite the 'uitas patrum' as their source.⁸⁰ In this context, as well as authorising their narratives, the invocation directly associates the tales with the *Vie des Pères*. Furthermore, the two 'hagiographic' texts recall the events and trajectories of two tales in the *Vie des Pères*. The *Vie de saint Jehan Paulus* shares the hermit's transgressions of sex and murder with *Ivresse* (35) (albeit without his primary sin of inebriation), and his savage penitential transformation. The *Vie de saint Jean Bouche d'or* recounts a comparable tale to *Ermite accusé* (24), but it is a princess rather than the daughter of a local bourgeois who accuses the protagonist.⁸¹ As the final 'volume' in this prolific codex, the *Vie des Pères*

⁷⁷ However, unlike *Miserere* in the previous section, neither of these texts is numbered. Moreover, they are each concluded by 'explicit'.

⁷⁸ Charles Allyn Williams, *The German Legends of the Hairy Anchorite. With Two Old French Texts of 'La Vie de Saint Jehan Paulus'*, ed. by Louis Allen (Urbano: University of Illinois Press, 1935).

⁷⁹ Alfred Weber, 'La Vie de saint Jean Bouche d'or', *Romania*, 6 (1877): 328-40.

⁸⁰ The first saint's life begins 'En uitas patrum / vn haut liure / Qui les bons estoires / nous liure / Trouuai la uie dun saint home / Ki fu apostoiles de rome...' (fol. 203vb). Within the first twenty lines, we find the same reference in the *Vie de saint Jean Bouche d'or*: 'I. miracle uoel coumenchie / Que uitas patrum nous raconte' (fol. 216ra).

⁸¹ Weber, p. 328.

offers the compiler a readymade continuation to the two books of the *Miracles*, and one that is readily expandable.

In Paris, Ars., MS 5204, a single table of contents features at the beginning of the compilation, which lists both the collective works and their components. This fourteenth-century codex is one of three manuscripts that are likely to have been copied from the same exemplar, and thus represent one principal act of compilation. The Parisian bookmaker, Thomas de Maubeuge, produced Ars. MS 5204, along with Brussels, BR, MS 9229-30 and The Hague, KB, MS 71 A 24.⁸² These three codices have closely related copies of the *Vie des Pères*, a distinct arrangement of the *Miracles*, and the same five items between the two story collections: the *Dit de l'unicorne*, the *Vie de sainte Thaïs*, *Vie de sainte Euphrosine*, *Quinze signes du Jugement dernier*, and *Li regres Nostre Dame*. However, each codex has its own particular characteristics. I will be focusing in particular on Ars., MS 5204, which retains almost all of its original table of contents. The extant table begins with the final thirty-seven saints' lives from the now missing *Vie des saints*, which opened the compilation.⁸³ Four rubricated headings delineate the remaining material in the codex. The first is for the collection of narratives on the life of Christ that precedes the *Miracles* and *Vie des Pères*: 'Ci commencent les rebriches des enfances nostre nostre [sic] seigneur' (fol. Ar).⁸⁴ The next rubricated title heads the list of *Miracles* (from Book I only), as well as three of the items that divide it from the *Vie des Pères*, namely the *Dit de l'unicorne*, the *Vie de sainte Thaïs*, and the *Vie de sainte Euphrosine*. However, the *Quinze Signes* is hierarchised and identified by its own rubricated title: 'Ci apres commence a parler des .xv. signes du

⁸² On the history of Thomas de Maubeuge, and the provenance and patrons of these three manuscripts see Rouse and Rouse, *Manuscripts and their Makers*, vol. I, pp. 173-202.

⁸³ The *Vie des saints* that originally preceded the two other manuscripts have been found (see Appendix 2: Table 2.4). From the remaining list in Ars., MS 5204, it appears that it contained a distinct hagiographic collection. See Rouse and Rouse, *Manuscripts and their Makers*, pp. 193-94.

⁸⁴ The prequel to The Hague manuscript, Paris, BnF f. fr. 183, begins with items on the life of Christ, before moving on to various saints' lives, which highlights the bespoke nature of the initial components of the two codices.

monde' (fol. Av). The final rubricated heading is for the *Vie des Pères*: 'Ci commencent les chapistres de la vie des peres' (fol. Av). The clear divisions in the table of contents are reflected in the paratextual organisation of the codex: page-width miniatures with two or three panels introduce the first page of the three collective works.⁸⁵ In contrast to the thirteenth-century Ars., MSS 3517 and 3518, the *Vie des Pères* is not secondary to Gautier's work, but a complementary and equal component of the broader compilation.

The copy of the *Vie des Pères* in the Parisian triplets is striking for the paratextual subdivision of the tales, the long interpolation, and the omission of two key narratives. Two of the most widely disseminated tales of the *Vie des Pères*, *Juitel* (2) and *Thaïs* (6), are absent from these three codices.⁸⁶ The collection is preceded in all three manuscripts by narratives analogous to these two tales: Gautier's I Mir 12 and the 'independent' *Vie de sainte Thaïs*.⁸⁷ The absence of these two tales could therefore be understood in terms of their duplication of narrative material already present in each codex. Furthermore, the omission of more than one ubiquitous tale suggests that this was a deliberate act, and one that most likely occurred in the exemplar of the three manuscripts.

The four remaining codices in which the *Vie des Pères* is not the first item and does not follow the *Miracles* share only the contingent position of our story collection. Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 13521 represents the most diverse context. This thirteenth-century compilation covers almost all of the types of vernacular material found in the other multi-text codices, from saints' lives, Wace's *Conception Nostre Dame*, Gautier's *Miracles*, the *Sept Sages*, to the history of the kings of France, the

⁸⁵ They are approximately 11 to 13 lines high, which is half the height of the equivalent illustrations in the more elaborately decorated The Hague manuscript.

⁸⁶ The prevalence of these two tales in the copies the *Vie des Pères* is clear in Appendix 2: Table 2.2.

⁸⁷ The short titles of the *Miracles* are based on those found in the full edition, Gautier de Coinci, *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame*, ed. by V. Frederic Koenig, 4 vols (Geneva: Droz, 1955).

Pseudo-Turpin, and Roger d'Argenteuil's *Bible*. Yet, it also contains less common contexts such as Pierre de Beauvais' *Bestiaire* (which is one of a number of 'translations' by this author in the codex), the prose *Moralités des philosophes*, a prose translation of the *Hystoria Albigensis*, love lyrics and the *Chastelaine de Vergi*. However, the paratextual presentation of the *Vie des Pères* is more typical. Beginning at the start of a new quire, a two-panel miniature introduces the first tale, whilst the rubric foregrounds the collection: 'Ci coumence la uie des peres' (fol. 121ra).⁸⁸ The subsequent tales are announced by a historiated initial and rubric. It is one of the six multi-text codices that include an image for each tale. The paratextual presentation thus underlines the status of the *Vie des Pères* as a collection, the contingency of its tales, and content of each narrative. The same cannot be said for Gautier's *Miracles*, which is not identified in the paratext.⁸⁹ Furthermore, the visual presentation of the *Miracles* is less elaborate than that of the *Vie des Pères*: only the first of the sixteen miracles is accompanied by a historiated initial and the rest are introduced by *champie* initials.

In the two thirteenth-century multi-text codices, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2094 and fr. 12471, the *Vie des Pères* is unidentified and compiled with primarily religious and didactic pieces, including in both cases the *Dit de l'unicorne*. However, the presentation of the story collection is antithetical. Fr. 2094 is the only codex to feature tales from the 'second' and 'third' *Vie des Pères* alone, and the only manuscript in which the paratext/*mise en page* does not differentiate the tales. The narratives thus appear as one continuous work, referred to simply as 'li livres' (fol. 171rb) in the explicit. By contrast, in fr. 12471, the narratives are outlined, but the integrity of the story

⁸⁸ The title is repeated in the impromptu 'Explicit la vie des peres' (fol. 203v), which erroneously appears after *Colombe* (30) rather than after the final tale. Another fifteen tales from the 'first' *Vie des Pères* begin at the start of the next quire, making a total of 40.

⁸⁹ However, the last miracle is interrupted at the end of folio 419v, so we cannot ascertain if Gautier's collection was named in the 'explicit'.

collection is not. The *Vie des Pères* follows a range of moral and didactic pieces, grouped according to verse form.⁹⁰ The codex divides into three parts. The first series is formed of octosyllabic verse (couplets and stanzas) and presented in two columns (fols 1-46v). Then the second series features texts written in alexandrines or decasyllables and presented in a single column (fols 47r-110r).⁹¹ These two parts are followed by forty-one tales from the octosyllabic *Vie des Pères*. The individual tales are each preceded by a rubric and miniature, and thus presented as the other 'independent' items in the codex. The *Vie des Pères* is not identified in any introductory paratext, and the final tale is incomplete which makes it impossible to ascertain whether there was an explicit for the story collection. In its extant state, the *Vie des Pères* thus becomes a third series of short items, within the didactic compilation of fr. 12471.⁹²

The Bern manuscript is the only fifteenth-century 'multi-text codex' according to my definition.⁹³ In addition to appearing as part of a compilation, the copy of the *Vie des Pères* diverges from the other fifteenth-century copies, which tend to revert back to the 'first' form. It is one of the two fifteenth-century manuscripts to include tales from the continuations or interpolations.

The diachronic changes in the compilation of the *Vie des Pères* reflect broader trends in book production and textual transmission. The aesthetic of extensibility, whether illustrated by the continuations of the collection or the compilation with other material, thus reflects contemporary thirteenth- and fourteenth-century approaches to textual integrity and to manuscript compilation. By contrast, the later

⁹⁰ The consistent style of decoration across the codex suggests that the units are of the same provenance.

⁹¹ The only exception is the last item, Adam de Sueil's *Chaton en français* (fols 110r-120v), which is composed in octosyllables yet presented in a single column.

⁹² A number of miniatures depict masters teaching groups of students and rubrics underline the pedagogical nature of the texts. See Busby, *Codex and Context*, p. 210.

⁹³ In the corpus of *Vie des Pères* manuscripts, there are only three fifteenth-century manuscripts that transmit the *Vie des Pères* with other items, and two of these include only one additional item.

manuscripts reveal a desire to preserve the older versions of the textual tradition rather than the compilatorial impulses evidenced in the earlier codices. A similar antiquarian movement has been identified in the later copies of Arthurian prose romances, such as the *Lancelot-Grail Cycle* and *Guiron le Courtois*, which reflect an interest in reproducing an ‘accurate’ copy.⁹⁴

2.3 The *Vie des Pères* at the Origins of Compilation

In two codices that begin with the *Vie des Pères*, the story collection is appropriated and expanded according to the global designs of the compilers. In the thirteenth-century organic codex, Paris, Ars., MS 3527, the textual, paratextual and ideological framework of the compilation is established by forty tales from the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*. The second example, Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Château, MS 475, is a complex composite codex that compiles tales from the *Vie des Pères* across quires copied in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and distinct compilatorial principles distinguish the two stages of compilation. The dissolution of the boundaries of the *Vie des Pères* in these two manuscripts moves one step closer to the disintegration of the story collection and re-compilation of its tales, which will be examined in the final part of this chapter.

⁹⁴ Jane Gilbert highlighted the ‘antiquarian movement’ in the later manuscripts of the textual traditions that form the object of the MFLCOF project, in her collaborative paper with Paul Vetch, “I was but the learner; now I am the master”: Modelling and Implementing a Digital Resource for the Medieval Francophone Literary Cultures Outside France project’, presented at the workshop ‘Applying New Digital Methods to the Humanities’, held at the British Library on 27 June 2014.

2.3.1 The *Vie des Pères* as Matrix in Paris, Ars., MS 3527

The modern descriptions of this Picard manuscript do not reflect the material as it is presented in the codex.⁹⁵ The ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* (fols 1-100vb) and Gautier’s *Miracles* (fols 100vb-117va, 136ra-155vb) appear to dominate the manuscript, covering three quarters of the folios. Yet rather than figure as two discrete story collections, as in fr. 1546 and Ars., MS 5204 (see 2.2), the compiler presents the works in terms of their component parts, prefacing each individual item with a rubric and historiated initial (see Appendix 2: Table 2.6).⁹⁶ There is no distinction between the independent items and those that form part of the story collections. The *mise en page* does not differentiate or hierarchise: minimal blank space is left between all of the items and there are no explicits. Ars., MS 3527 thus embodies one long repository of short textual units, presented in a highly consistent manner.⁹⁷ Moreover, content is emphasised over authorship. Instead of Gautier de Coinci, the historiated initial and rubric that introduce the prologue of the *Miracles* foreground the celebration of the Virgin: ‘De la mere au roi de paradis’ (fol. 100vb).⁹⁸ Likewise, the interpolation of the Renclus de Molliens’s *Miserere* within the series from the *Miracles* further underlines how authorship is suppressed. The rubric for *Miserere* merely states ‘Cest uns molt biaux dis’ (fol. 117va), concealing the identity of this popular didactic piece and its well-known author, and easing the transition between the interpolated text and the miracles. The reader is encouraged to experience the works of the famous monastic

⁹⁵ On the ‘picardisant’ characteristics of the texts, see *Li Romans de Carité et Miserere*, pp. xx-xxi; and also *NRCE*, vol. VII, p. 5.

⁹⁶ However, the rubrics for the final two items are incomplete.

⁹⁷ The only variations in the *mise en page* reflect divergences in verse form (the stanzas of *Miserere* and the songs after Gautier’s prologue (fols 103ra-106rb)). Additionally, the *Passion Dieu* has a comparatively elaborate programme of illustrations, formed of twenty miniatures, which subdivides the narrative into episodes. A similar programme of miniatures accompany the *Passion* in Ars., MS 5204.

⁹⁸ The reference to his name in the prologue is, however, retained (fol. 102vb). On the portraits of Gautier de Coinci see Kathryn A. Duys, ‘Minstrel’s Mantle and Monk’s Hood: The Authorial Persona of Gautier de Coinci in his Poetry and Illuminations’, in *Gautier de Coinci*, pp. 37-63 (especially pp. 49-63).

authors, Gautier de Coinci and the Renclus de Molliens, as a single sermonising voice harmonising with the anonymous narrator of the *Vie des Pères*.⁹⁹

The paratextual presentation of Ars., MS 3527 even subdivides one of the tales of the *Vie des Pères* to heighten its impact on the reader. The forty tales from the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* are presented as forty-two textual units, because *Haleine* (9) is subdivided into three discrete units.¹⁰⁰ In contrast to other copies of the *Vie des Pères* which subdivide the tales, such as Ars., MS 5204, this segmentation only occurs once in Ars., MS 3527.¹⁰¹ The subdivision of *Haleine* (9) highlights the discrete journeys of spiritual salvation undertaken by its three protagonists, and the rubrics and historiated initials underline this. The first rubric states ‘Dou fil au seneschal’ (fol. 19rb) and the historiated initial depicts a boy at mass with a hermit. It introduces the tale of the seneschal’s son, who is raised with the prince following his father’s death. The teacher responsible for educating the boy becomes jealous and causes the seneschal’s son to fall into disfavour with the king, which results in a plot to kill him.¹⁰² However, an act of divine intervention stops the boy from meeting his death in the forest, and keeps him in the safety of the chapel with a hermit. In recognition of God’s blessing, the seneschal’s son decides to become a hermit. The moment pictured is thus the catalyst for his religious conversion. The following section moves on to the prince (‘De lui .i. petit vous lairai / *Et del fil au roi vous dirai*’, fol. 22vb [ll. 3947-48, Lecoy, ed.]), as outlined in the rubric: ‘Del fil au roi compains au fil dou seneschal’ (fol. 22vb). The illustration depicts the dauphin out hunting on horseback, which again is the key event in his spiritual journey. During the hunting trip, a

⁹⁹ On the approximation of Gautier de Coinci and the Renclus de Molliens see also the discussion of fr. 23111 above. A number of intertextual links further facilitate the integration of *Miserere*, for example, the presence of Theophilus, who is the protagonist of the preceding miracle (I Mir 10, fol. 106ra).

¹⁰⁰ The two tales found in other copies of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* but not in this codex are *Ave Maria* (14) and *Genle du diable* (29).

¹⁰¹ The same narrative is divided into six units in Ars., MS 5204.

¹⁰² The teacher’s evil plan is based on both the son and the king believing that the other thinks they have bad breath. It is this section that induced the tale’s modern title, ‘Haleine’.

marvellous white stag leads him to the hermitage of the seneschal's son and he decides to stay with him and devote his life to God. The final and shortest section recounts how the king joins them, renounces the throne, and builds a monastery. The rubric highlights his initial anger towards his son for his religious conversion: 'Du fil au roi ki se rendi en lemitage *et* li peres len volt ieter' (fol. 24ra) and the illustration depicts his visit to the hermitage.¹⁰³ Once more the paratext emphasises the moment that precipitates the protagonist's spiritual awakening. *Haleine* (9) combines a heterogeneous mix of narrative motifs from divergent literary traditions, and primarily #2205 and #4183 from Frederic Tubach's *Index Exemplorum*.¹⁰⁴ The subdivision of *Haleine* (9) in Ars., MS 3527 thus undoes the seams of the author's act of *conjointure*, in order to enhance the compiler's own design and multiply the 'examples' on offer.

The three autonomous narratives that follow the *Vie des Pères* and *Miracles* are classified by modern scholars as a saint's life, a romance and a *fabliau*: *La Vie de saint Grégoire* (fols 155vb-169vb);¹⁰⁵ the only complete copy of the *Roman du comte de Poitiers* (fols 169vb-179va);¹⁰⁶ and version II of *Le Sacristan* (fols 179va-182rb).¹⁰⁷ However, these seemingly disparate texts are compiled with the same purpose in the devotional and didactic context of Ars., MS 3527. Indeed, their compilation relates less to their 'genre' than their intended function.¹⁰⁸ Their reception is shaped by the spiritual agenda established by the tales of the *Vie des Pères* and *Miracles*, and the consistent *mise*

¹⁰³ His arrival and anger are the last lines recounted in the previous section: 'Fist tant ke li ermitage vit / Grant courous ot *et* grant despit' (fol. 24ra [these lines invert the couplet (ll. 4165-66) in Lecoy's edition]). The third section thus begins with the king's speech to his son: 'Lors li dist biaux fuis biaux amis / En quel liu vous iestes vous mis' (fol. 24ra [ll. 4167-68, Lecoy ed.]).

¹⁰⁴ Tudor, *Tales*, p. 376.

¹⁰⁵ See Mario Roques, 'Sur deux particularités métriques de la *Vie de saint Grégoire* en ancien français', *Romania*, 48 (1922): 41-55.

¹⁰⁶ *Roman du comte de Poitiers*, ed. by Francisque Michel (Paris: Silvestre, 1831).

¹⁰⁷ NRCF, vol. VII, no. 74, pp. 1-189.

¹⁰⁸ See Paul Wackers's cautionary call for medieval texts to be considered in terms of their function rather than their modern classification, 'There are no Genres: Remarks on the Classification of Literary Texts', *Reinardus*, 13 (2000): 237-48.

en page. Moreover, their contextualisation draws out similarities between the narratives, especially *La Vie de saint Grégoire* and *Roman du comte de Poitiers*.

Of the three, *La Vie de saint Grégoire* is the most seemingly appropriate for a devotional context, adding another hagiographical narrative to the examples already present in the *Vie des Pères* (*Thaïs* (6) and *Saint Paulin* (33)). Indeed, the illustration and rubric foreground his authority and status as pope. It is not the first appearance of this famous saint in the compilation: Gregory the Great's conversion of the Romans is the preface for the *Vie des Pères's* *Image de pierre* (17). Yet his life did not begin so gloriously, as the first couplet insinuates: 'Or entendes por dieu amour / la uie dun bon pecheor' (fol. 155vb). Gregory is the product of an illicit union between a brother, under the spell of the devil, and his sister. Gregory then commits the double incest of unwittingly marrying his mother, recalling the *Vie des Pères* tale of *Inceste* (4). After fending off a spurned suitor in battle, he is awarded her hand and they live together until the uncomfortable realisation of his origins, which leads into his penitential journey and rehabilitation. The chivalric and courtly context of the initial setting and the narrative's movement from the realms of Aquitaine/France to Rome is echoed in the trajectory of the *Comte de Poitiers*. Both narratives begin with the tale of the parents' union and conclude with the achievements of the son.¹⁰⁹ They thus form an unlikely but fitting dyad in the context of Ars., MS 3527.

The first couplet of the *Comte de Poitiers* resembles the tone of the preceding pious tales: 'Oies por dieu le fil Marie / Chancon do molt grant segnorie' (fol. 169vb). Yet the narrative begins in playful terms. The court of the Carolingian king Pepin is the scene of the eponymous Count's boast that he is richer than the king because his beautiful and virtuous wife wants to have sex with him constantly ('*Et tart et tempre et main et soir*', fol. 170ra). In response, the Duke of Normandy wagers that he can

¹⁰⁹ Following the journey of humility experienced by the eponymous hero, the second part of the *Comte de Poitiers* recounts the conception and feats of his son, 'li bons quens Gui' (fol. 176vb).

seduce her and with the help of the Countess's deceitful servant he gains enough evidence to convince Pepin's court. The Count, having lost his land, goes into exile in the forest. After abandoning his wife, he undertakes a redemptive and transformative journey in much the same manner as the penitential suffering of the secular and religious figures in the *Vie des Pères*, such as *Baril* (18). In the orbit of the *Vie des Pères* tales, the Count's passage from boastful pride to humility via the forest takes on a greater spiritual significance. Indeed, the forest becomes the locus of spiritual rather than chivalric adventure in the pious tales, as indicated in *Haleine* (9).

The historiated initial that precedes the narrative heightens the spiritual significance of the Count's errancy in the forest. In the image, the Count is confronted by a lion as his wife kneels in prayer. It recalls the moment when, full of anger and shame, the Count prepares to decapitate his wife. The Countess invokes the Virgin, and almost immediately the lion appears, distracting her husband's attention.¹¹⁰ The confrontation with the lion thus saves the Countess's life and prevents the Count from doing further wrong. The lion is sacrificed to save the protagonists as Christ was crucified to save the souls of humankind, and this reading is enhanced by the presence of the *Passion Dieu*. After defeating the lion, the Count departs alone and faces his next encounter with a diabolical fire-breathing serpent. The moment depicted in the historiated initial is crucial to the Count's salvation. Only thanks to the intervention of the Virgin does his path change. The visual and textual contextualisation of the *Comte de Poitiers* in Ars., MS 3527 thus advocates a redemptive reading of the Count's passage from pride to humility.

The penultimate narrative in the codex appears to have been deliberately truncated to fit the agenda of the compilation. *Le Sacristan's* dénouement (or lack

¹¹⁰ When the Count returns to Poitiers in disguise, he meets the Duke who reveals the wife's innocence and in a moment of dramatic irony comments: 'La mere Dieu qu'el servoit tant / Li a fait moult povre garant / Car li Quens li trencha le cief. / Or sui tenans de son fief.' Rather than proffering 'moult povre garant', the Virgin is portrayed as saving her life.

thereof) represents a divergence from the other copies. It recounts another example of a lusty and sinful religious figure, recalling the *Vie des Pères' Sacristine* (13), in which the female sacristan of a convent church falls in love with a local man and leaves her role for two years, and *Goliard* (28), which recounts how a corrupt cleric enrolls in a monastery in order to steal its expensive church-ware. Yet, whereas the sinners in the *Vie des Pères* repent and rise to heavenly heights, the sacristan in the 'complete' versions of this *fabliau* enacts the Fall with humorous and brutal consequences.¹¹¹ The inversion, so typical in the comic narratives, is, however, limited in this copy. The truncated ending of *Le Sacristan* in Ars., MS 3527 halts the trajectory of this playful narrative, so that it concludes in a contemplative as opposed to transgressive manner.

Much of the content of *Le Sacristan* reflects the gestures and dialogue of the pious tale, but the intended humour of its linguistic play is limited in this copy. A married woman, Ydoine, goes to church to pray to the Virgin for assistance, as she and her husband have fallen on hard times: 'Au crucefis ala proier / *Que damedieus* le consellast / *Et son signor* gaaing donast' (ll. 72-74).¹¹² Yet rather than divine intervention, this 'assistance' comes in the form of the lecherous sacristan, who, peppering his speech with Christian invocations, offers her a large sum of money to sleep with him:¹¹³

Jhesucris li haus souuerains
 Dame co dist li soucretains
 Si'm'ait *dieus* en'cui i'espoir
 Jou ne vauroie plus auoir
 De bien; fors ke auoecques'moi
 Je *vous* tenisse en.i. lieu coi
 Je'sui de chaens tresoriers
 Si *vous* donroie bons deniers

¹¹¹ On opposing movement in the pious tale and *fabliaux* see Brian J. Levy, *The Comic Text: Patterns and Images in the Old French Fabliaux* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), p. 247.

¹¹² Moreover, the devil is depicted as playing a role in their descent (ll. 26-27).

¹¹³ His offer recalls the goading of the black monk who lures the young female recluse in *Nièce* (34) (see 2.4.1).

*Vous avez .c. liures dou mien
Si vous en'garirés mont bien
Jdone ot .c. liures nomer... (ll. 86-96)*

Rather than go through with the deal, Ydoine comes up with a ruse, knowing the sacristan would be compromised if he pleaded his case. After stealing the church offerings and sacred vessels, the debauched monk excitedly thinks his desires will be fulfilled. However, the moment he gets his hands on Ydoine, her husband leaps from his hiding place and accidentally lands a deadly blow. The couple then decide to return the body to the abbey and leave it in the latrine. It is found by the prior, who – in order to divert any blame – dumps the body outside the house of the most wise and courtly woman in the town, Ydoine. The copy in Ars., MS 3527 ends just as her husband, Guillaume, is about to find the murdered sacristan. The couple are left to confront the *revenant*, and re-confront their crime rather than jubilantly getting away with murder as in the other copies. The absence of the immoral ending assimilates the comic tale more readily to the context of Ars., MS 3527. Whilst there is still potential for humour, the abrupt ending leaves open the possibility of their redemption. The final piece of the codex, the *Passion Dieu*, is the ultimate reminder of Christ's sacrifice and forgiveness.

Ars., MS 3527 is an exceptional example of the *Vie des Pères* as a vehicle for manuscript compilation. Rather than forming a 'multi-text codex', the paratextual organisation encourages its reception as a single 'book'. The openness and extensible aesthetic of the *Vie des Pères* is exploited to form a new compilation that culminates with Christ's ultimate sacrifice. As the author of the 'first' *Vie des Pères* compiled diverse narratives into a clear and consistent textual framework (in the form of the sermonising prologues and epilogues), the compiler imitates and expands his framework to incorporate additional narratives through the consistent and unhierarchised paratextual programme. The anonymity and malleability of the *Vie des*

Pères, as well as its tolerance for what could be described as ‘generic’ diversity, draws additional material into its penitential matrix, forming a varied and enticing compilation of good examples.

2.3.2 Compilation and Re-Compilation: Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Château

MS 475

In the composite codex, Chantilly, MS 475, the tales from the *Vie des Pères* and Gautier’s *Miracles* are compiled in two stages, which reflect two distinct modes of compilation. The fourteenth-century additions to the thirteenth-century quires alter the configuration of the *Vie des Pères* and the overall structure of the compilation. The thirteenth-century quires feature narratives defined as *fabliaux*, along with antifeminist items. By contrast, all of the fourteenth-century additions are strictly serious in intent, including prayers in French and Latin and a treatise on mass. For Richard Trachsler, ‘the co-presence of small narratives and what one may call para-liturgical texts is perhaps the most striking feature of this manuscript.’¹¹⁴ However, when compared with other manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères*, such as fr. 20040 and Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25439, this type of co-presence is not so unusual. In the context of this study, the differences between the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century modes of compilation are the most remarkable characteristics of Chantilly, MS 475.

The first group of thirteenth-century quires feature seven tales from the *Vie des Pères*, which form a reduced version of the story collection.¹¹⁵ *Fornication imitée* (1) is followed by six tales, which appear consistently in this order in the second largest

¹¹⁴ See Richard Trachsler, ‘Uncourtly Texts in Courtly Books: Observations on MS Chantilly, Musée Condé 475,’ in *Courtly Arts and the Art of Courtliness*, ed. by Keith Busby and Christopher Kleinhenz (Cambridge: Brewer, 2006), pp. 679-92, p. 683.

¹¹⁵ See Appendix 2: Table 2.7 for a list of the contents and structure of the codex. There are two errors in the modern foliation: the numbers 13 and 77 are duplicated.

group of codices, based on their arrangement of the tales (see Appendix 2: Table 2.2). Indeed, the same seven tales appear as a condensed *Vie des Pères* in fr. 25439, with the addition of *Image de pierre* (17). These two codices thus indicate the circulation of a reduced form of the story collection, and the effects of this configuration on the reception of the *Vie des Pères* will be discussed in more detail below (2.4.1). In Chantilly, MS 475, *Fornication imitée* (1) is introduced by the only Latin rubric: 'Incipit vita prima de duobus quorum / unus incidit in fornicationem' (fol. 1ra). Like Ars., MS 3527, there is no mention of the title of the story collection, but it nonetheless indicates that it is the first in a series of 'lives'. The rubrics of the following six tales are all written in French, and all of the tales are introduced by a large red and blue puzzle initial. The final tale in this initial series, *Ivresse* (35), is concluded with 'Explicit' (fol. 22vb).¹¹⁶ Thus the first rubric and the explicit frame the seven tales as a series, but do not indicate the identity of the story collection, as is the case in fr. 25439. Moreover, the explicit divides the tales from *De l'Hermite et del Jongleur*.¹¹⁷ It is copied by the same scribe and introduced by the same red and blue puzzle initials as the tales from the *Vie des Pères*, but is distinguished from them.¹¹⁸ It nevertheless complements the content of the preceding seven narratives, which all feature hermits as protagonists and this is emphasised in their rubrics (see Appendix 2: Table 2.6).¹¹⁹ Moreover, *De l'Hermite* has close parallels with the third narrative, *Prévôt d'Aquilée* (32) (see 2.41), as it concerns another hermit looking to find his equal

¹¹⁶ A different hand writes the word 'natus' in lighter coloured ink next to the explicit. It is not clear why or when this was added.

¹¹⁷ By contrast, *De l'Hermite et del Jongleur* is integrated into the *Vie des Pères* in Ars., MS 3518, see above, p. 116.

¹¹⁸ Furthermore, the rubric for *De l'Hermite et del Jongleur* appears notably different from the preceding rubrics.

¹¹⁹ Even the rubric for *Niève*, which recounts the fall into prostitution of a young recluse, foregrounds her hermitic uncle. By contrast, fr. 25439 does not have the same repetition of 'hermite' in the rubrics for this series.

on earth.¹²⁰ The text ends abruptly on 26r, the second folio of the third twelve-folio quire. The verso page is blank and then the first item in the fourteenth-century series begins on folio 27r. A further fifteen quires are added to this quire, before the five remaining thirteenth-century quires.

The homogeneity and order of the thirteenth-century quires has been established from their original quire numbers (see Appendix 2: Table 2.6).¹²¹ These are written in red ink at the very bottom of the last folio of each quire. The first three quires with the *Vie des Pères* and *De l'Hermite* tales are numbered 'xx.', 'xxi.' and 'xxii.', which indicates that what remains may once have followed a series of items in a longer (and possibly unfinished) thirteenth-century compilation. Following the fifteen fourteenth-century quires, the next thirteenth-century unit has quires numbered 'xxiii.', 'xxiiii.', and a third quire, which is likely to have originally been numbered 'xxv'.¹²²

The hermits of the *Vie des Pères* are succeeded by a variety of figures from secular life in the second group of thirteenth-century quires, which are presented with the same *mise en page* as the first. They include six miracles from Book II of Gautier's collection and the 'independent' narrative, *Del Tumbeor Nostre Dame* (fols 188vb-194vb), found also with the *Miracles* in Ars., MS 3518.¹²³ Detached from the *Miracles*, there is no indication of their being a part of the story collection or the work of Gautier de Coinci. Moreover, *Del Tumbeor* is presented as indistinguishable from the other miracles. Like *Fornication imitée* (1) in the *Vie des Pères* series, the prologue to

¹²⁰ In *De l'Hermite*, the hermit's equal is a *jongleur*, who retells a series of examples that underline his virtue, and causes the hermit to realise his initial misjudgement. Whereas the hermit *experiences* the Provost's daily resistance to temptation in the *Prévôt d'Aquilée* (32), it is the *jongleur*'s narration that proves his worth.

¹²¹ See Trachsler, 'Uncourtly', p. 681.

¹²² No number is currently visible.

¹²³ The series begins with II Mir 18 to II Mir 21 in sequence, *Del Tumbeor*, and then II Mir 13 and II Mir 23.

the first miracle (II Mir 18) introduces the nature of the content and the variety and abundance of ‘flowers’ on offer:¹²⁴

Tant truis escrit foi *que* doi mame
Des dous miracle nostre dame
Que ie ne sai le quel choisir
Ne ie nai pas si grant loisir
Que ie les praingne tous a fait
Ains fas ausi *comme* cil fait
Qui les fleurs queut aual le pre
Quant il est uers *et* esfloure
Et il uoit tant de flours diu^{er}ses
*Ver*meilles indes jaunes *per*ses
Et per deriere et *per* deuent
Ne set la quele i cueille auent
Autel uous dis ie *per* sain iame
Des haus miracles nostre dame (fol. 173ra)

Thus in the same manner as the seven tales from the *Vie des Pères*, they form a subsection, unified by their Marian content and concluded by a collective ‘Explicit’ (fol. 203rb). Moreover, the rubrics underline their secular protagonists, and the emphasis on their salvation and/or the intervention of the Virgin (see Appendix 2: Table 2.6). They include a ‘bouriois’, ‘homme lai’, ‘jongleur’ and ‘menestrel’, and the final miracle’s ‘uilain bouuier’. There is a distinct movement from the holy lives of the ‘peres anciens’ in the first group of narratives to the contemporary secular figures of these Marian miracles. This progression culminates in the final group of thirteenth-century quires, which turn to more frivolous and worldly concerns.

The final thirteenth-century series contains primarily humorous narratives, including six *fabliaux* (as defined by the *NRCF*) and additional antifeminist texts. Quire 22 (in the current arrangement) is numbered, ‘xxvii.’, which indicates that there may once have been an additional quire (‘xxvi.?’) between it and the series of miracles. Red and blue puzzle initials and rubrics mark the start of each item in the

¹²⁴ The prologue to the following miracle (II Mir 19) also offers a lengthy entrance into the subject matter...

same manner as the preceding thirteenth-century units.¹²⁵ The first item essentially functions as an advert against married life (fols 204ra-205vb), and is followed by four narratives about deceptive and adulterous women and the satirical *L'Evangile aux femmes*, here ironically entitled 'La fiance *que* on doit auoir *en* femme' (fol. 214ra).¹²⁶ Yet women are not the only culprits: in two of the narratives lecherous priests are the lovers of adulterous wives (*Le Vilain de Bailluel* and *La Dame qui fist les trois tors entor le moustier*), and in a third, a worldly priest is living in sin with his mistress, who fornicates with an errant butcher (*Le Bouchier d'Abeville*).¹²⁷ These narratives not only recall the protagonists of the pious tales, but also their sexual transgressions and worldly lust. Trachsler argues that Chantilly, MS 475 provides evidence of 'the compatibility of *fabliaux* and religious stories'.¹²⁸ However, he does not recognise how their interaction differs in the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century formations of this manuscript. When considered as part of the thirteenth-century compilation, the comic texts represent the third series. Their distinct humorous mode is underlined by the use of the terms 'fabliaus' and 'fabel' both within the rubrics and in the texts. The organisation of the three distinct series of thirteenth-century quires thus implicates three distinct categories of text, and generates a progression from the examples of the hermits to the miracles experienced by lay members of society, before finally taking a more comic (and antifeminist) approach to controlling lust, greed and women.

Whereas the thirteenth-century quires bring together items that become progressively worldlier in tone and content, the fourteenth-century compiler

¹²⁵ The final item, 'Dou cheval *que* li marchans uendi', cuts off nine lines from the bottom of folio 217vb. At the top of folio 218ra begins an incomplete copy of *La Vie de sainte Katherine* (fols 218ra-223vb). It appears to have been added to this quire after the copying of the more bawdy material, as there is no rubric and the initials are incomplete.

¹²⁶ *The 'Evangile aux femmes': An Old-French Satire on Women*, ed. by George C. Keidel (Baltimore: Friedenwald, 1895).

¹²⁷ For a more detailed reading of *Le Bouchier d'Abeville*, see 1.3.2.

¹²⁸ 'Uncourtly', p. 690.

demonstrates a different compilatorial impulse. Tales from the *Vie des Pères* and *Miracles* are introduced into the codex to complete and to extend the pre-existing series. Their *mise en page* resembles the thirteenth-century quires, but the initials that precede each item are simply formed in red ink. These additions to the *Vie des Pères* increase the total number of tales to forty-two, thus equalling the number commonly associated with the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*. Significantly, no single tale is repeated, which suggests that the fourteenth-century additions were carefully selected from a more extensive exemplar of the *Vie des Pères* in order to fill in the gaps. The tales appear in two series, divided by sixteen miracles from Book I of Gautier’s collection and the ‘para-liturgical’ items (‘Interpolation J’). The prologue to Book I is absent, and the prologues and epilogues of several miracles are edited, which removes Gautier’s framework and disassociates them from the *Miracles*.¹²⁹ Thus they anonymously augment the *Vie des Pères*. However, the fourteenth-century compiler does not mark the integrity or identity of the *Vie des Pères* in the paratext.¹³⁰ Indeed, the dissolution of the boundaries of the story collection led Busby to describe Chantilly, MS 475 as not a ‘real’ *Vie des Pères* codex, which does not do justice to the high proportion of tales included from the story collection.¹³¹ Thus in its fourteenth-century form, the gradual and measured development across the thirteenth-century quires is lost. The comic items become an afterthought, following the more extensive compilation of pious tales and miracles.

Chantilly, MS 475 demonstrates the propensity of the *Vie des Pères* for both fragmentation and expansion. Ars., MS 3527 and Chantilly, MS 475 both foreground the individual parts of the *Vie des Pères* over the identity of the story collection, and in

¹²⁹ See Trachsler, ‘Uncourtly’, and Ducrot-Granderye, pp. 82-84.

¹³⁰ It is possible that the compiler did not know that these tales formed part of the *Vie des Pères* or *Miracles*. However, as has been illustrated in 2.2, the more complete copies of both story collections are predominantly identified in the paratext.

¹³¹ Busby, *Codex and Context*, p. 210.

both codices, the pious tales are compiled with their comic counterparts, the *fabliaux*. In the case of Ars., MS 3527, the trajectory of *Le Sacristan* is deliberately abridged to fit the purpose of the compilation, leaving the reader to contemplate the potential confession and absolution of the protagonists. By contrast, the thirteenth-century compiler of Chantilly, MS 475 brings together the comic texts as a discrete series, which is distinct from the pious tales and represents a divergent but complementary mode of clerical conversation. The tripartite remains of the thirteenth-century compilation, however, become subsumed into a more extensive copy of the *Vie des Pères*, in all but name.

So far, the focus of this chapter has been the manuscripts that transmit significant components of the *Vie des Pères*, from copies which foreground the integrity of the story collection to those in which its boundaries are dissolved. The final section will examine the independent circulation of tales from the *Vie des Pères* to illustrate how they are compiled into new frameworks, and the effects of their re-compilation on reception.

2.4 The Disintegration of the *Vie des Pères*

The tales of the *Vie des Pères* are the most mobile of the three story collections under investigation. Tudor suggests that the tales of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères* were ‘intended to be read and enjoyed for their own sake rather than be integrated into some larger work’ and that their adaptation was limited.¹³² Whilst this is largely supported by the manuscript corpus, the circulation of shorter groupings and individual tales demonstrate that manuscript compilers did not refrain from extracting, interpolating and editing tales from the collection. Indeed, the self-contained nature of the

¹³² *Tales*, p. 24.

individual tales appears to encourage their extraction. In the first of these examples, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25439, the *Vie des Pères* circulates in a reduced form, which is also found in the thirteenth-century unit of Chantilly, MS 475, and I will demonstrate the appropriateness of this configuration for ecclesiastical readers. I will then consider the examples in which individual tales or groups break free from the framework of the *Vie des Pères* and are appropriated and adapted in new compilations.

2.4.1 The Condensed *Vie des Pères* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25439

The seven tales that appear at the start of Chantilly, MS 475 are grouped with the addition of an eighth tale, *Image de pierre* (17) in another thirteenth-century manuscript, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25439:

Fornication imitée (1)
Ermite accusé (24)
Brûlure (25)
Prévôt d'Aquilée (32)
Saint Paulain (33)
Nièce (34)
Ivresse (35)
Image de pierre (17)

The eight tales listed above represent an alternative opening to the second largest group of *Vie des Pères* manuscripts according to the order of the tales. This series is also one of the most stable. Whilst this could result from the grouping of tales in blocks of quires, there is much to suggest a subtending authorial structure underlying their arrangement.¹³³ As an alternative opening to the collection, this series more accurately embodies the designation 'vie des peres'. In the tales habitually numbered one to eight according to their order in fr. 1546, only *Fornication imitée* (1), *Sarrasine* (3) and *Miserere* (7) focus on the trials of 'peres anciens'. In the five other narratives, the

¹³³ The greater consistency in the order of tales in the *Ysopet* could also be attributed to the short length of the fables. Blocks of fables would have been copied from discrete quires, creating more stable groupings.

journey of salvation is undertaken by secular protagonists, such as the widow's amorous neighbour in *Renieur* (4), the *paysan* and the thief in *Copeaux* (5), the prostitute *Thaïs* (6), and the gardener in *Jardinier* (8). However, as demonstrated in Chantilly, MS 475, the group found at the start of fr. 25439 (with the exception of *Image de pierre* (17)) all concern hermits. Whereas the manuscripts with longer forms of the collection frequently allow the reader to pick and choose the tales they want to read in a discontinuous and selective fashion, the reduced form of the collection in fr. 25439 does not offer the same degree of choice. Before looking at the other content in this codex, I will explore the effects of reading these tales as a series.

After *Fornication imitée* (1), *Ermite accusé* (24) and *Brûlure* (25) form a neat pair, in which women cause the torment of the two protagonists. In the first, a young girl blames her pregnancy on an innocent and reclusive hermit who, like the hermits in *Fornication imitée* (1), makes baskets to survive. He is beaten and castigated by the townsfolk for his hypocrisy and lust. Only when the girl has difficulties in giving birth does she remember the suffering she has caused the hermit and decides to confess her lies to a priest. The hermit forgives her and her baby is born safely. In *Brûlure* (25), another worthy hermit lives in isolation near a castle. One evening, a prostitute, who hears about his saintly life, wagers that she can sleep with him before the morning. She pretends to need the hermit's help and the naïve hermit invites her to stay the night. She refuses the bed he makes for her, insisting on sleeping in his bed in order to seduce him. Unlike the naïve hermit who falls for the temptress in *Fornication imitée* (1), the pious hermit in *Brûlure* (25) resists her advances, placing his hand in a flame to quell the fires of temptation. He opts for the literal burning of flesh to overcome the metaphorical smouldering of his desire. God then strikes the prostitute dead. The men from the castle discover her body and accuse the hermit of murder caused by sexual excess. In the same manner as *Ermite accusé* (24), the

growing crowd enacts mob justice on the innocent hermit. However, due to the hermit's goodness, the woman is miraculously revived and recounts what happened, begging the hermit for forgiveness. All then honour the hermit as a saint and the prostitute commits herself to God. As in *Ermite accusé* (24), it is the woman and not the hermit who repents for her sins, in both cases corroborating the antifeminist associations of women with deceit and lechery.

In a similar manner to *Brûlure* (25), *Prévôt d'Aquilee* (32) recounts an episode in which the protagonist must resist the advances of a seductress. In this tale, however, she only goes so far before making him take a freezing cold bath, and then arousing him once more. This sequence of seduction is repeated throughout the night and forms part of the hermit's insight into the daily tribulations of the Provost, his identified equal on earth. Indeed, the long-suffering hermit is horrified to discover 'lou iusticier daquilee / Qui mainte ame a de cors gitee / Qui nestoit reclus ne hermites / Seroit ses parouz en merites' (fol. 155r [= ll. 13780-783, ed. Lecoy]). After going to Aquileia, his first impressions do not improve his views of the provost, whom he finds dressed in lavish red attire and hanging a criminal. Yet after learning that he has lived on bread and water for ten years whilst his guests eat sumptuous feasts, and after experiencing his unfulfilled nightly seductions, the hermit realises the virtue of his 'equal'. Rather than experience hardship 'hors de la balance / del monde', he faces and resists temptation on a daily basis, as the hermit reflectively proclaims:

Legieremant se puet garder
qui se fait clore *et* enmurer
lou solaz dou monde *et* la ioie
Quil ne donoise ne ne voie
pou prisent teux genz lor auoir
Mais cil doient corone auoir
Qui puent faire lor talant
Ou monde *et* il nen font niant
Ainz se tienent por deu servir

Et por sa grace conquerit [sic] (fol. 160v [= ll. 14142-151, ed. Lecoy])

Unlike the tales that venerate the purity of the hermitic lifestyle, this tale praises those who live virtuously within society, exemplified by the discipline and chastity of the provost. Indeed, by comparing the holy hermit with the secular yet abstinent provost this narrative not only casts a critical eye on his pride and complacency, but also reflects back on the ‘peres anciens’ in the first three tales of the series, opening up the possibilities and protagonists of virtue.

Prévôt d’Aquilée (32) segues neatly into *Saint Paulin* (33), in which the bishop like the provost resists the lure of worldly pleasures, choosing instead to give away his large income for the good of others. The exemplary generosity of the famous saint is placed in contrast to the contemporary members of the clergy who enjoy their riches: ‘Fox est qui ne pense a sa fim’ (fol. 162r [= l. 14265, ed. Lecoy]). When he has nothing left to give, Paulinus then offers himself in exchange for a prisoner held by a Saracen king and the second part of the tale turns into a narrative of conversion.

Rather than the temptation of a male figure, *Nièce* (34) portrays the corruption of a female recluse by ‘i. moine plein dordure / Que li deables mout amoit’ (fol. 168r [= ll. 14689-690, ed. Lecoy]).¹³⁴ Yet the subject of the narrative is presented as the hermit who chaperones his orphaned niece (‘Dun autre vous vuil raconter’ (fol. 166v [= l. 14599, ed. Lecoy])) and this is reflected in the rubrics that introduce the tale in this copy and others. After being educated by her uncle, she lives happily for five years as a recluse. However, the devil targets her and eventually succeeds by employing his loyal servant, the impious monk. The blasphemous nature of the courtship is emphasised by the ironic appropriation of terms relating to religious modes of persuasion: each day he visited ‘a li prier *et* sermoner’ (fol. 168r [=

¹³⁴ Neither ‘oisdive’ (l. 14689) nor the variant reading ‘ordure’ in fr. 25439 rhyme satisfactorily with ‘luie/leue’ (l. 14688).

l. 14706, ed. Lecoy]).¹³⁵ Apart from the seduction, the focalisation is primarily from the perspective of the uncle, who the night of his niece's departure has a dream that a dragon burns her and her cell. When he eventually finds her, she has left the monk and become a prostitute. After approaching her in disguise, the hermit persuades his niece to seek salvation and return to the hermitage. Like *Thaïs* (6), the prostitute becomes a saint, thanks to the shepherding of a holy hermit. Yet whereas *Thaïs* (6) depicts the rise of a fallen woman, in *Nièce* (34) the young woman is living as a recluse before being tempted away from her spiritual existence. The trajectory depicts the downfall and redemption of an individual who was already dedicated to God.

The following tale, *Ivresse* (35), brings together the themes of the foregoing narratives. Again it centres on a hermit, who like the recluse in *Nièce* (34) is the object of an assault by the devil. After several attacks, the devil agrees that if he succumbs to one of three sins (inebriation, fornication, murder) he will leave him alone. Believing inebriation to be the least evil, the hermit gets drunk one night at his friend the miller's house. Yet this small sin becomes a large misdemeanour. He rapes the miller's wife, who had fallen asleep whilst escorting the drunken hermit home, and then he kills the angry miller after he witnesses the sexual assault on his wife. After waking up to his sins, the hermit begins a long journey of penance, before finding out from the Pope that he has been forgiven. The epilogue of this tale underlines the redemptive nature of confession:

Par ce compe wuil ce prouer
 Que nuns ne doit desperer
 Pour pechie quil face ainz doit querre
 a son cors penitence *et* guerre
 tant que li cors ait guerredom
et loier de sa mesprisom

¹³⁵ In other copies of *Nièce* (34), the courtship of the evil monk is followed by a lengthy passage (ll. 14714-761, ed. Lecoy), which criticises the gluttony and vice of the Benedictines ('les noirs'). Lecoy notes that this 'tirade' is also absent from fr. 12471, Ars., MS 5216, and fr. 24758.

ainsinc *com* li hermites fit
Qui son cors a dampnemaⁿt mit
pour same de dampnemaⁿt traire
Que li cors li voloit atraire (fol. 179v [= ll. 15532-541, ed. Lecoy])

As a condensed form of the collection, these seven tales more accurately reflect the characterisation of the collection as a translation of the *Vitae patrum* than the actual range of protagonists found in the longer forms of the *Vie des Pères*. Moreover, their grouping appears especially pertinent for the ecclesiastical reader: the collection as it is found in fr. 25439 is not only a reminder of the ever-present threat of the devil in its human (and especially, feminine) forms, and the forgiveness offered to those who repent, but focuses on the downfalls of the pious, and the self-critical gaze required to avoid pride and complacency.

Whilst there is much to suggest that the author of the *Vie des Pères* composed the collection for a lay audience, this is not to say it did not serve a purpose to those already dedicated to a religious life, and in particular those in direct contact with the public.¹³⁶ The physical and textual characteristics of fr. 25439 indicate that it was made for such a readership, for whom the focus on the ‘peres anciens’ would offer the opportunity for self-reflexion. This small-format organic codex is formed of twenty-eight quaternions with quire numbers on the last folio of each quire. Dated to the second half of the thirteenth century, the script is cursive, and the characteristics of the language have been linked to eastern France, and in particular, Lorraine.¹³⁷ The decoration is limited to plain red initials, and most items are introduced by rubrics. In some instances, the boundaries between texts which we consider distinct are not marked. The first item is Herman de Valenciennes’ *Roman de Sapience* [= *Histoire de la*

¹³⁶ Busby also suggests that this manuscript may have been owned by the orders or the clergy, see *Codex and Context*, p. 210.

¹³⁷ See Paul Meyer’s description of this codex, ‘Notice du Ms. Bibl. nat. fr. 25439’, *Bulletin de la Société des Anciens Textes Français*, 25-26 (1899): 37-63.

Bible], which is of a similar configuration to the copy in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 20039.¹³⁸ It is followed by *La Venjance Nostre Seigneur* in both fr. 25439 and fr. 20039, which continues the narration where Herman's work ceases. Indeed, this is reflected in the rubric: 'romans *commant* li mort *nostre* seignor fut vaingie de ceux qui lou crucifiaient' (fol. 100r). We then find the tales from the *Vie des Pères*, which are preceded by a rubric for the collection: 'Romans de la uie des peres' (fol. 138v). Another rubric then distinguishes the prologue from the start of the narrative of *Fornication imitée* (1): 'De lermite que la dame Requit damors' (fol. 139r). Yet rather than the first line of narrative ('Dui furent ki mout s'entr'amerent'), the division occurs half way through the prologue, after line 32. Thus, as in the manuscripts with longer copies of the collection, the *Vie des Pères* is differentiated as a collective work, and at the same time, the start of each narrative is marked by a rubric and large red initial.

The protagonist in the final narrative of the *Vie des Pères* in fr. 25439, *Image de pierre* (17), is a married man rather than a hermit. Before engaging in a wrestling match, he places his wedding ring on an old Roman statue. Subsequently, each time he lies in bed with his wife, the statue haunts him. A period of suffering ensues, and the man asks the advice of a hermit, who tells him that it is a trial sent by God and to pray to the Virgin. His devotion to the Virgin is so great that she tells him to create a statue in her image. Yet the ruling against idolatry forbids the building of the statue. The Pope eventually submits after hearing about the angry voice that repeatedly visits the husband to warn him against disobeying the Virgin. One day, the wondrous statue goes missing. On its return, the Virgin's hand opens to reveal the man's ring. After seven years of suffering, he is then able to resume his relationship with his wife and continues to serve the Virgin. The secular protagonists and Marian content

¹³⁸ His name appears 'danz Hernauz' (fol. 7r and fol. 29v).

distinguish this tale from the preceding *Vie des Pères* narratives. However, in fr. 25439, the epilogue to *Image de pierre* (17) is augmented by an incomplete extract from Wace's *Assomption*, the fifth part of his *Conception Nostre Dame*.¹³⁹ No paratextual markers differentiate the extract from *Image de pierre* (17). The combination of these items creates a moment for reflection and praise of the Virgin. Thus this final narrative has a different function from the preceding series of *Vie des Pères* tales.

The final item in the codex gives a further indication of the potential readership of this manuscript. It is not preceded by a rubric (only a large plain red initial), but is presented in the explicit as 'li romans de confession' (fol. 224v).¹⁴⁰ This 'traitier' builds on the exhortation to confession in the *Vie des Pères*, exemplified in the prologue to *Ivresse* (35):¹⁴¹

Por ce lor ie tant *com* viuons
 Qua *bien* faire nous asfremons
 Et par confessiom veraie
 faisons *et* lou pont *et* la voie
 [...]
 a sa grace de legier vient
 Cil qui *confessiom* maintient
 par la bone confessiom
 Vient la bone remissiom
 Et par la bone repantance (fol. 174r [= ll. 15154-157, 15162-166, ed. Lecoy])

Whilst the tales of the *Vie des Pères* encourage the masses to confess, the treatise on confession has a specific goal identified in the first few lines:

Se deux me vuet donner sa grace
 preposemant ai que ie face
 Un traitier par com puet sauoir
Commant prestes se doit auoir
 Qui confessiom viaut oir. (fol. 194r)

Rather than encouraging confession, it focuses on the nature of the exchange between priest and penitent, and in particular how the priest should conduct himself.

¹³⁹ Wace, *The Hagiographical Works: The Conception Nostre Dame and the Lives of St Margaret and St Nicholas*, ed. by Jean Blacker, Glyn S. Burgess and Amy Ogden (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

¹⁴⁰ The use of 'romans' in the rubrics in this codex clearly implies 'in the vernacular'.

¹⁴¹ Like *Fornication imitée* (1), the rubric follows the prologue of *Ivresse* (35) in this copy.

The benefits of confession are emphasised, and exempla are used to support why it is important to confess everything. Yet, special attention is paid to the responsibility of the confessor and the nuances of the role are developed. Rather than forcing the sins out of the confessee, the priest is advised to tread softly:

*Et par circunlociom
Par signes et par douz salmom,
Face issir fors de la cauerne
Lou sarpens qui laianz gouverne. (fol. 201r-v)*

The treatise covers the seven principal sins, the sins that can be committed by the five senses, and those against the Ten Commandments. After confession comes penitence, and the narrator instructs on the types of penance to impose, finishing with examples of penitence taken from saints' lives.¹⁴² The final section recalls Christ's sacrifice, which links back to the material at the start of the codex. The closing lines resume how the priest should finish the confession:

*Quant li prestres a faite fim
Li pechierres en gre recoit
Et prent congie et il lou doit
Commander a Dieu doucement,
Et prier Deu devotement
Que bon volonté lou teigne
Jusquen la fin et parmaigne
O lui en la vie celestre
Ou il nous face trestouz estre. Amen. (fol. 224v)*

Thus, fr. 25439 represents a devotional and practical handbook for a member of the clergy, which covers not only (apocryphal) narratives on Biblical history, but also practical guidance for the confessor. Within this compilation, the tales from the *Vie des Pères* embody exempla with specific appeal and relevance for those engaged in the religious life, which provide the opportunity for personal reflexion and identification with the falls and feats of the 'peres anciens'.

Whilst other manuscripts contain series from the *Vie des Pères*, fr. 25439 is the only codex to present the extracted tales as *the* collection, albeit in a reduced form.

¹⁴² Meyer, 'Notice du Ms. Bibl. nat. fr. 25439', p. 62.

Indeed, the other decontextualised series do not feature a rubric that identifies the *Vie des Pères*, nor do they begin with *Fornication imitée* (1), the prologue of which characterises and projects the idea of its collective form. The different reading experiences encouraged thus suggest a tension between the status of the tale and the collection.

2.4.2 Extraction, Adaptation and Re-Compilation: Shorter Series and Individual Tales

The most famous instance of the decontextualisation of tales from the *Vie des Pères* occurs in the fourteenth-century codex known as the *Rosarius*, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 12483.¹⁴³ A comparable and earlier example of the extraction, integration and re-compilation of diverse items can be found in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 818. This enchantingly illustrated thirteenth-century codex was produced in the locality of Lyon and has primarily attracted attention for its evidence of the regional dialect, especially the group of miracles of local provenance.¹⁴⁴ Yet in addition to the many unica, it includes material extracted from several well-known contemporary religious narrative works, including Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles*, Wace's *Conception Nostre Dame* and Herman de Valenciennes' *Assomption Nostre Dame* as well as eight tales from the 'first' *Vie des Pères*. These items are organised to form 'une sorte de *Mariale* en langue vulgaire', in which Gautier's prologue to Book I functions as a general introduction to the compilation.¹⁴⁵ As in other manuscripts of the *Miracles*, such as Ars., MS 3518, Gautier's prologue is followed by a table of contents, which lists the components of

¹⁴³ See my 'Introduction', pp. 22-23.

¹⁴⁴ See Paul Meyer, 'Notice sur le recueil de miracles de la Vierge renfermé dans le ms. Bibl. nat. fr. 818', *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale et autres bibliothèques*, 34.2 (1895): 57-88. See also Hilding Kjellmann, *La Deuxième collection anglo-normande des miracles de la sainte Vierge et son original latin. Avec les miracles correspondants des mss. fr. 375 et 818 de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris: Champion, 1922).

¹⁴⁵ Meyer, 'Notice sur le recueil de miracles', p.58

the first 275 folios. The appropriation of the prologue and position of the table imitate the structure of Gautier's Books.

The first series of items in fr. 818 focus on the life of the Virgin, in a similar manner to Ars., MSS 3517 and 3518, and MS 5204. In fr. 818, the Marian compilation begins with the first two components of Wace's *Conception Nostre Dame*, the *Établissement de la Feste de la Conception Nostre Dame* and the *Conception* proper (fols 4vb-12rb).¹⁴⁶ Instead of Wace's *Assomption*, we find the version by Herman de Valenciennes (fols 13va-17ra).¹⁴⁷ The compiler does not suppress the different author attributions within these texts. The voices of Gautier, Wace and Herman together contribute to the overriding construction of the Marian compilation, and in particular, the life of the Virgin. Indeed, as Maureen Boulton notes, '[h]ors de leurs contextes habituels, ces textes subissent un changement d'interprétation. Regroupés ils créent une "Vie de la Vierge" aussi différente de celle de Wace et d'Herman que de celle attribuée à Gautier de Coinci'.¹⁴⁸ In forming this composite 'Vie de la Vierge', the compiler of fr. 818 is unconcerned by the disparate rhyme schemes or the juxtaposition of prose and verse.¹⁴⁹ The item after the *Assomption* is a prose translation of the *Quis dabit* by Pseudo-Bernard, in which the Virgin laments the loss of her son (fols 17ra-20va),¹⁵⁰ followed by two items in octosyllabic couplets on Elizabeth of Schönau's visions of the Virgin (fols 20va-22vb).

¹⁴⁶ See Wace, *The Hagiographical Works*.

¹⁴⁷ 'De l'Assomption Nostre Dame' von Herman de Valenciennes, ed. by Carl August Strate (Greifswald: Adler, 1913).

¹⁴⁸ Maureen Boulton, 'La "Bible" d'Herman de Valenciennes: Texte inconstant, texte perméable', in *Mouvances et jointures*, pp. 85-96, p. 90.

¹⁴⁹ Gautier's and Wace's works are written in octosyllabic couplets, whereas Herman's *Assomption* is in monorhymed *laissez* of alexandrines.

¹⁵⁰ Arthur Långfors, 'Contributions à la bibliographie des Plaintes de la Vierge', *Revue des Langues Romanes*, 53 (1910): 58-69.

These introductory pieces on the Virgin are succeeded by a long series of miracles in verse, and then twenty-five saints' lives in prose.¹⁵¹ To this sequence are added a further eight saints' lives in prose on folios 276 to 310. These items are not listed in the table of contents and are copied by a third scribe.¹⁵² However, despite the absence of the second series of saints' lives from the table and the change of scribe, the consistent decoration and rubrication across the two units links their production.¹⁵³ A historiated initial precedes all of the items, but those of the second unit are slightly larger. The table divides the material up to folio 275v into four books. However, this appears arbitrary, reflecting no sign of coherent structure or division of the types of content. There is no further textual or paratextual division of each 'liure'. The segregation of the material into four books thus occurs only at the level of rubrication, imitating the idea but not the substance of Gautier's substructures.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, the rubrics for the third and fourth books are merged in error with the rubric for the subsequent narrative. In both the table and the codex, the rubric of the fifty-sixth miracle (fols 65vb-67va) and of the *Vie des Pères's Image de pierre* (17) (fols 113rb-116vb) is joined to that of its relative book:¹⁵⁵

'Ici comence li terz liures coment deus desfent losand[er?] de sa douce mere marie' (fol. 4ra)
 'Ici *commence* li tierz liures *comment* dex deffent losange[er?]e de sa douce mere marie' (fol. 65vb)
 'Ici comence li quarz liures de la premiere ymage nostre dame sainte marie' (fol. 4rb)

¹⁵¹ However, the second miracle is in prose (fols 24ra-vb). There are twenty-six items in the series of saints' lives, but the final two items both concern Saint Mamer.

¹⁵² The first scribe is responsible for copying the majority of the codex (fols 1r-224r), and a second completes the first series of saints' lives (fols 224r-275v).

¹⁵³ In agreement with Meyer, Alison Stones asserts that the decoration is consistent throughout, see Appendix IV: 'Manuscripts Listed by Stylistic Attribution', in *Gautier de Coinci*, note 56, p. 389.

¹⁵⁴ The 'quarz liures' is formed of the final fifteen miracles (which includes the final two from the *Vie des Pères (Image de pierre* (17) and *Impératrice* (11)) and all those from Gautier's *Miracles*) and the series of twenty-five saints' lives. It therefore sub-divides this material neither on the level of types of content nor textual origins.

¹⁵⁵ By contrast, the first and second book are not rubricated in the table, only listed by the scribe, and thus do not appear in the rubrics of the codex. Mussafia suggests that the rubric of the fifty-sixth miracle could be a replication of the error in the original (most likely) Latin exemplar, and has nothing to do with the arrangement of the French compilation. Cited by Kjellman, p. XXVI.

‘Tci *commence* li quarz liures de la premiere nostre dame sainte marie virge’
(fol. 113rb)

The omission of ‘ymage’ from the rubric of *Image de pierre* (17) renders the title even more confusing. These errors in copying suggest that the scribe and rubricator were working from an exemplar for the first 275 folios of fr. 818, rather than the primordial copy.

The contextualisation and selection of tales from the *Vie des Pères* in fr. 818 reflect a considered act of integration. They are principally grouped after the Lyonnais miracles in verse, and are succeeded by the group of miracles by Gautier (see Appendix 2: Table 2.8). The eight tales are largely the most miraclesque of the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, with the exception of *Crucifix* (26). Whereas all the miracles from Gautier’s collection appear in succession, the first two tales from the *Vie des Pères* are detached from the main series on folios 103ra to 121va. *Renieur* (4) and *Crucifix* (26) are separated from each other by ‘De lymage nostre seigneur qui li juis feri’ (fol. 99ra-va), and from the group by five further miracles. The reasons for the separation are unclear. However, as a series they all portray the blasphemous behaviour of Jews. In *Renieur* (4), a Jewish necromancer tells the infatuated bourgeois that he will only assist in his love quest if he renounces God, the saints and the Virgin. The Christian will not renounce the Virgin, and instead prays before a statue of her. Whilst in prayer, the statue bows down to him and this is witnessed by the object of his affection, who then agrees to marry him. The miracle that separates *Renieur* (4) and *Crucifix* (26) is a variant on the latter, which combines its theme of the Jewish desecration of Christian icons with a variant of the legend of the murder of children, as in the *Vie des Pères*’s *Juitel* (2).¹⁵⁶ In ‘De lymage nostre seigneur qui li juis feri’ (fol. 99ra-va), a Jew breaks an infant Christ from a statue of the Virgin and when he gets it home, blood rushes

¹⁵⁶ William F. MacLehose, *‘A Tender Age’: Cultural Anxieties over the Child in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (New York: Colombia, 2008), p. 50.

from it. After throwing it in a well, the Jew is tracked down by a group of Christians, who ensure his conversion. Thus, *Crucifix* (26) complements the content of the preceding narratives.

Of further significance is the adaptation of the tales from the *Vie des Pères* to fit the context of fr. 818. In most cases, the prologues and the epilogues of the tales are either omitted or truncated. In each instance, two or four lines of verse have been added that function as ‘invisible paratext’ (see Appendix 2: Table 2.8).¹⁵⁷ The lines appended to the end of each tale underline the role of the Virgin and the help (‘äie’) she proffers, and emphasise the benefits of praying to her (‘prier’). These unique conclusions to the tales are paralleled in some of the Lyonnais miracles of fr. 818:

Saluon tuit celle Marie
E prions li que a son fil prie
Que a trestoz nos doint sa grace.
Disons amen, e Deu o face. Amen.
(*Del Sogrestain qui fu noiez l’ame de cui Sainte Marie toli au deable* (fols 39va-40ra), Kjellman ed., p. 276, ll. 75-78)

Cele virge de cui parlun
Nos face avoir verai pardun. Amen.
(*Del larrun qui fu penduz e la virge le socurut* (fols 52va-53ra) Kjellman ed., p. 283, ll. 71-72,)

L’archidacres grant joi a
De ce que li Grex li conta,
Los en rendit a Jhesu Crist
Et a sa mere autresi.
La douce virgine Marie
Nos soit voers son fil en äie. Amen.
(*De l’ymage Jhesu Crist qui seoit en la fonte e porta sa garentie voiant toz* (fols 62va-64rb), Kjellman ed., p. 296, ll. 254-59)

Deu en rendont grez e mercis
Et a sa mere autressi.
La sainte mere Jhesu Crist
Nos doint la grace de son fil.
(*D’un chanoine cui la virge arousa sa bouche de son lait* (fols 64va-65rb), Kjellman ed., p. 297, ll. 111-14)

La douce mere Jhesu Crist

¹⁵⁷ I borrow the expression ‘invisible paratext’ from a presentation by Florian Kragl at one of the meetings of the ‘Dynamics’ project.

Preieit a son glorious fil
Que teuz ovres mener nos dont
Que il nos doint vrai pardon. Amen. (*D'une pucele a cui la virge apparut* (fol. 80va-vb), Kjellman ed., p. 298, ll. 68-71)

Furthermore, similar lines are added to two of Gautier's *Miracles*. Following the *annominatio* of 'servir' so typical of Gautier, I Mir 23 ('Del .v. roses qui furent trouees en la bouche en moine', fols 129vb-130rb) is concluded by 'Elle qui est uirge *et* mere / en preieit son fil *et* son pere' (fol. 130rb). Moreover, the *annominatio* of 'penser' at the end of I Mir 26 ('De la nonain qui se maria au chevalier *que* nostre dame sainte Marie rapella', fols 130rb-132ra) is succeeded by:

Celle uirge qui Deu [a]porta
Qui cele none rapella
De sa folie prit son fil
Que il nos gart de tot peril amen. (fols 131vb-132ra)

The repetitive content in these concluding passages suggests that the compiler added these lines to all of the items in the miracle section of the codex, or to the additional items used to augment the series, in order to homogenise the compilation. Whilst the unifying thread of each of the four 'books' is less definable, the compiler creates a sense of uniformity on the level of the miracle. By removing much of the prologues and epilogues of the tales from the *Vie des Pères*, the tales are dislocated from what primarily distinguishes them as part of the *Vie des Pères*. The adaptation of their endings integrates them into the compilation, and demonstrates their potential for adaptation when the collection of the framework is removed.

Like fr. 818 and the *Rosarius*, the other examples of the decontextualisation of multiple tales from the *Vie des Pères* all occur in codices with items from Gautier's *Miracles*. Indeed, the tales with the most Marian content are the most mobile, and the most likely to be decontextualised from the *Vie des Pères*.¹⁵⁸ Three of the miracles

¹⁵⁸ As a genre, the miracle was extremely popular in the thirteenth century, and groups of miracles can be found in large vernacular multi-text codices with predominantly secular narratives, such as Paris,

from the story collection that appear in fr. 818 are also found in two other manuscripts which include small groups of tales from the *Vie des Pères*: *Renieur* (4), *Impératrice* (11), and *Image de pierre* (17). They are all found in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1807 along with a further pairing found in fr. 818, *Sacristine* (13) and *Abbesse grosse* (19) (see Appendix 2: Table 2.9). The formation of this dyad reflects the response to their parallel content. In *Sacristine* (13), the Virgin covers for the fallen nun during her two-year elopement with a local man. In *Abbesse grosse* (19), a nun's affair with her valet results in her falling pregnant. Her fellow nuns inform the bishop, but before his arrival the Virgin absolves her transgression. She helps the nun to give birth and sends the baby to be raised by a hermit, and suckled by a deer. When the bishop visits, he thinks her fellow sisters are crazy, but the nun then confesses her sin and recounts the miraculous intervention of the Virgin. Together these tales from the *Vie des Pères* form part of a 'reduced' version of Gautier's *Miracles* in fr. 1807, which begins with the prologue to Book I and the collective rubric: 'Ici commencent les miracles nostre dame' (fol. 51vb). All but one of the seven tales from the 'first' *Vie des Pères* occur together, after the items from the *Miracles*. Significantly, the exception, *Ave Maria* (14) (fols 68rb-69vb), is juxtaposed with I Mir 15 ('Dun clerc luxurieux et orgueilleux qui souent prioit nostre dame', fols 67rb - 68rb), which has direct parallels with this tale.¹⁵⁹ The final tale, *Fou* (10), depicts the savage-looking Felix's privileged relationship with the Virgin. Thus, all the tales extracted from the *Vie des Pères* are Marian. Their identity as part of the *Vie des Pères* and not Gautier's collection is unlikely to be apparent or important to the reader, for whom the new composite and reduced collection represents various examples of Marian devotion.

BnF, f. fr. 375. Moreover, the protagonists are less likely to be the 'peres anciens', the definable figures associated with the *Vie des Pères*.

¹⁵⁹ See Tudor, 'Telling the same tale?.'

Two of the items from the *Vie des Pères* in fr. 818 also occur in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 15212 as part of a sequence of shorter texts that follows the dyad by the Renclus de Molliens.¹⁶⁰ These tales are *Impératrice* (11), the popular tale of the empress's loyalty to her husband and devotion to the Virgin, and *Crucifix* (26) (see Appendix 2: Table 2.9). The latter appears with two of Gautier's *Miracles*, and the former is grouped with other tales from the *Vie des Pères* at the end of the codex.¹⁶¹ As in fr. 1807 and fr. 818, the relationship of these tales to the *Vie des Pères* is not identified in the paratext.¹⁶² The most striking characteristic of this decontextualised series is its combination of items from the 'first' and 'second' *Vie des Pères*. The only other extant manuscript with extracted tales to do this is the *Rosarius* codex, and both were made in the fourteenth century. Yet unlike the well-presented *Rosarius*, fr. 15212 is a low-grade production similar to fr. 25439. This narrow compilation appears to be associated with a religious readership, both at the level of presentation and content. The text is written in a single column, and the initials are plain or inhabited with intriguing human and animal figures.

As for the isolated tales, *Ave Maria* (14) is the *Vie des Pères* tale most commonly found in isolation. It is integrated into Gautier's *Miracles* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1613, and into a reduced form of his collection in Tours, Bibliothèque municipale MS 948. It is also found alone in the composite and mutilated Arras, Bibliothèque municipale MS 657. An isolated tale from the *Vie des Pères* is found in one fifteenth-century paper manuscript, Geneva, Bibliothèque publique et universitaire, fr. 179bis, which is not listed by Lecoy. *Merlot* (42) is found on folios 133r-140r of this badly

¹⁶⁰ The consistent quire numbers begin on the first folio of the first quire of *Miserere* (fol. 16r) and continue to the end of the codex, numbered up to 'xxi'. The first two quires of the codex containing the *Chronique* are not numbered.

¹⁶¹ The varied items that divide the *Vie des Pères* tales include *inter alia* a prayer in Latin (fol. 149v), a doctrinal piece addressed to 'tres chiers freres' (fol. 150r), and a prose redaction of the *Quinze Signes*.

¹⁶² The later group of *Vie des Pères* tales are listed in the catalogue as 'Miracles de Notre-Dame en vers', but there is no medieval rubric.

mutilated multi-text codex of diverse narratives and other items, including the *Chastelaine de Vergi*.

The breaking down of the *Vie des Pères* is primarily a thirteenth-century phenomenon. Readers from religious communities appear to play a particular role in the disintegration and re-compilation of the story collection. In addition to the content of the co-texts, the physical features of these books support this hypothesis. The extant codices are largely small-format manuscripts of predominantly low-grade parchment with minimal decoration. The compilatorial methods of this type of readership thus reflect a different intended function and interest in the *Vie des Pères* from that represented by compilations such as fr. 24301. At the same time as encouraging the laity to confess, the tales of the *Vie des Pères* become a source of spiritual reflection for members of the clergy. The condensed form of the collection, as found in fr. 25439, particularly caters for this readership, whilst adhering more faithfully to the characterisation of the story collection as a vernacular *Vitae patrum*. The frequent extraction of the *Vie des Pères*' Marian tales can be placed in the context of the growing popularity of miracle collections. By contrast, the presence of *Merlot* (42) in the fifteenth-century Bern manuscript suggests its reception as an independent *exemplum*. These varied examples of extraction and re-compilation underline how readers and compilers did not shy away from de-contextualising the components of the collection and appropriating them according to their own designs.

This chapter has shown how the boundaries of the *Vie des Pères* open to incorporate other material, whether in the form of the identified 'continuations', 'interpolations' or other independent items, and how the accumulative and extensible nature of this

story collection often plays a central role in the compilation of the multi-text codices in which it is found. The iterative framework of the *Vie des Pères* encourages the multiplicity of the configurations of this story collection and its characteristic extensibility. Its *mouvance* is not only demonstrated by the multiple combinations and permutations of the story collection, but also the extraction and re-compilation of its tales, a phenomenon which has often been overlooked by modern scholars.

In each case, the manuscript's maker has the opportunity to negotiate the boundaries of the *Vie des Pères* through the paratextual presentation of the framework, and this in turn affects/effects the hermeneutic programme and the reception of the story collection. At one extreme (more akin to the presentation of the *FPA*), neither rubrics nor initials identify the individual narratives of the *Vie des Pères* (fr. 2094), creating a continuous reading experience. At the other, the tales are listed and numbered in a table of contents that facilitates their selection and discontinuous perusal. The different reading modes provoked by manuscript production indicate the intended usage or users of the manuscript, as well as the evolution of navigational tools in book production.

Despite the variety of contexts and protagonists in the *Vie des Pères* and their similarities with more secular narratives, it is important to underline that the genre of the pious tale (and miracle) is embedded in a distinct culture of dissemination, which differentiates this story collection from the other two. The penitential purpose of the *Vie des Pères* is easily assimilated to the agenda of other devotional narratives, especially miracles and saints' lives, both within story collections and independent from them.

In the next chapter, the 'generic' identity of the story collection also influences its circulation and the material it is compiled with throughout the medieval period. The first vernacular fable collection appears in a variety of manuscript

contexts from both England and the Continent. In the case of the *Ysopet*, this 'generic' identity is linked to authorship, both in the figure of the male *auctor* and forefather of the fable tradition, Aesop, and the female author-translator 'Marie'. In the course of three hundred years, the presence of the enigmatic female author fluctuates, often being overshadowed by the identity of the work as an 'Aesopic' fable collection.

Chapter 3

Authorship, Gender and Genre: The Manuscripts of Marie's *Ysopet*

Two principal and interrelated points frame this chapter: firstly, the attribution of the *Ysopet* to a female author named 'Marie', said to be 'de France'; secondly, the discernible geographical and diachronic trends in the compilation of this twelfth-century fable collection.¹ The longevity and diversity of the *Ysopet*'s manuscript dissemination along with the fluctuating presentation of its author(s) distinguish this story collection from those studied in the previous two chapters, and raise questions regarding the role and function of authorship and genre in manuscript compilation. The extant medieval copies of the *Ysopet* date from the early thirteenth to the turn of the sixteenth century, and throughout this period it is compiled with other material. The temporal and regional variations in the compilation of the *Ysopet* are reflected in the fluctuating status and presence of the enigmatic 'Marie'. Moreover, the manuscripts reveal divergent attitudes towards the authority of this unique female voice. However, the modern reception of the *Ysopet* and its elusive female author has largely been blinkered by the focus on one manuscript. A single thirteenth-century English manuscript has played a particularly prominent role in how we view 'Marie' and her corpus: London, BL, MS Harley 978. By considering it alongside the other four English manuscripts of the *Ysopet*, it is possible to reassess how its contents and compilation relate to the broader tradition, and reconsider its mythological hold over the modern critical reception of Marie. These five manuscripts include the earliest witnesses of the tradition and will be addressed first before turning to the continental codices. By the end of the thirteenth century, portraits of Marie emerge in the

¹ In order to prevent any confusion with the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, I will be referring to this story collection as the *Ysopet*, variations of which are frequently found in the paratexts that introduce or conclude the collection.

manuscripts of the *Ysopet* produced on the Continent. The different approaches to the iconographic representation of the author will be addressed in relation to the manuscript context of each copy and the reading experiences they elicit. The diachronic and geographical developments in the dissemination of the *Ysopet* culminate in the final section of this chapter, which examines the latest manuscripts. This group of codices reflects, on the one hand, an interest in reproducing earlier medieval texts or compilations, and on the other, the appropriation of the fables as supplementary material rather than the *Ysopet* as an integral work. In the case of the latter, the *Ysopet* is de-contextualised from the master framework of the prologue and epilogue, and hence, de-authorised. However, I will first examine the historical reception and construction of its female author, and the specific nature of the framework of this story collection.

3.1 Questions of Authorship: Marie and the First Vernacular Fable Collection

The fable tradition has been associated with the ancient Greek figure, Aesop, since antiquity. Yet, in contrast to popular belief, the attribution of his authorship is unfounded, as Jill Mann explains in her history of the beast fable:

[I]t may come as something of a surprise to learn that no fables known to have been written by Aesop exist. No surviving fable collection, and no individual fables, are old enough to have been written by Aesop, who lived, if he existed at all, in the sixth century BC. Aesop's name is linked with fables (and sometimes he is presented as telling them) in the works of numerous ancient Greek writers (Aristophanes, Plato, Aristotle, to name only a few), but he may have been no more than a legendary figure.²

Despite the absence of evidence to authenticate his authorship (or existence), Aesop has been reified as the forefather of the fable tradition and become a hallmark of the genre. In the ancient Greek texts highlighted by Mann, his presence suggests an

² Jill Mann, *From Aesop to Reynard: Beast Literature in Medieval Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 2.

extradiegetic *auctor-conteur*, in a similar manner to the ‘philosophers’ in the *Disciplina clericalis*. In the centuries that follow, the mention of his name invokes *auctoritas* and evokes a certain set of horizons of expectation.³ This is reflected in the prologue and epilogue of the earliest known vernacular fable collection, in which he appears as a protagonist in the story of composition, transmission and translation. In the *Ysopet* attributed to Marie, a diminutive of Aesop’s name is proposed in the prologue as the title of the ‘book’ (‘Esope apelë hum cest livre’) and this name is echoed in the paratext transcribed by the manuscripts’ rubricators and scribes.⁴ Variations of the diminutive form of Aesop (*Ysopet*/*Isopet*) came to function not only as the label for our fable collection but for the genre in general.⁵ The ancient Greek slave’s association with the fable genre continues to shape the reception of the tradition and its identity to the present day. However, of particular interest to this chapter is the impact of the first vernacular fable collection on our understanding of another enigmatic author figure.

3.1.1 The enigma of Marie, ‘de France’

The twelfth-century female author associated with the *Ysopet* shares a similar mythological history to Aesop, constructed by later generations of readers. Whilst a single figure called ‘Marie’ may have authored all the texts that we now attribute to her, her authorship cannot be asserted definitively. Neither can we more than speculate over the empirical person behind this author figure. The quest to identify

³ In his Latin fable collection composed in the first half of the first century, Phaedrus declares his debt to ‘Aesop’ in the first line, states that he is introducing material of his own in the second book, and then characterises the whole as ‘Aesopic’ (‘Aesopias, non Aesopi’). Aesop thus represents both a source and the genre as a whole. It is the collection by Phaedrus that ‘laid the foundations of the medieval beast tradition’. See Mann, pp. 3-4.

⁴ *Die Fabeln der Marie de France*, ed. by Karl Warnke, Bibliotheca Normannica VI (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1898), ‘Epilogus’, pp. 327-28 (l. 13).

⁵ See Hans R. Runte, ‘Fable (*Isopet*)’ in *Medieval France: An Encyclopedia*, ed. by William W. Kibler, Grover A. Zinn et al. (New York: Garland 1995), pp. 331-32.

the elusive ‘Marie’ and the works she composed has been a scholarly preoccupation for the last four hundred years. The modern construction of ‘Marie de France’ is the product of a narrative that has gradually evolved and continues to be redefined. Its origins can be traced back to the late sixteenth century, when Claude Fauchet coined the legendary post-medieval name, based on a literal reading of the epilogue to the *Ysopet*, which contains the famous line: ‘MARIE ai num, si sui de FRANCE’ (‘Epilogus’, l. 4).⁶ Two hundred years later, three eighteenth-century scholars – Thomas Warton, Thomas Tyrwhitt and Gervais de la Rue – furthered the establishment of the author, ‘Marie de France’, and her corpus.⁷ It is in this period that the ‘Marie’ of the *Ysopet* became identified as the same ‘Marie’ who is posited as the author of the twelve *lais* in MS Harley 978, which contains both story collections. The construction of authorship in this single medieval codex thus began to influence the modern response to ‘Marie’. A further work attributed to the same name was added to this corpus: the *Espurgatoire seint Patriz*, found in a single thirteenth-century multi-text codex, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25407.⁸ This important foundational period culminates in the publication of the first *Œuvres complètes* in 1820, which consolidated the narrative that these three works were the late twelfth-century compositions of a female author, writing in England.⁹ More recently, scholars have added a fourth piece to this body of work, *La Vie seinte Audree*. In the *Espurgatoire*, *Lais* and *Ysopet*, the attribution of authorship accompanies the motif of ‘remembrance’, and this concurrence is seen to

⁶ Claude Fauchet, *Recueil de l'origine de la langue et poesie françoise, ryme et romans. Plus les noms et sommaire des oeuvres de CXXVII: poetes François, vivans avant l'an M. CCC.* (Paris: Mamert Patisson, 1581), p. 163.

⁷ See Karen K. Jambeck, ‘Warton, Tyrwhitt, & De La Rue: Marie de France in the Eighteenth Century’, in *The Reception and Transmission of the Works of Marie de France, 1774-1974*, ed. by Chantal Maréchal (Lewiston, NJ: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), pp. 31-89. See also Richard Baum’s chapter ‘Marie de France et la recherche littéraire’, in *Recherches sur les œuvres attribuées à Marie de France*, Annales Universitatis Saraviensis, 9 (Heidelberg: Winter, 1968), pp. 59-92.

⁸ Fr. 25407 is understood to be a continental copy of an English manuscript. See Busby, *Codex and Context*, p. 499, note 29.

⁹ *Poésies de Marie de France, poète Anglo-Normand du XIIIe siècle, ou Recueil de lais, fables et autres productions de cette femme célèbre*, ed. by Jean-Baptiste-Bonaventure de Roquefort, 2 vols (Paris: Chasseriau, 1820). For Baum, ‘elle constitue en quelque sorte la consécration des recherches antérieures à 1820; elle constitue aussi le point de départ de toutes les recherches ultérieures’, p. 92.

authenticate the corpus.¹⁰ The final lines of *La Vie seinte Andree* include a ‘strikingly similar’ attribution of authorship to a nun named ‘Marie’, and this Anglo-Norman saint’s life is now widely believed to be the work of the same female author.¹¹

However, before the crystallisation of the twelfth-century Marie, a thirteenth-century construction of the female author of the *Ysopet* emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹² This ‘Marie’ was believed to be active in Flanders, and writing for Guillaume de Dampierre, count of Flanders.¹³ Additional thirteenth-century works were attributed to the ‘Marie’ of the fable collection. *L’Evangile aux femmes*, whose author is identified as ‘Marie de Compiegne’, appears with the *Ysopet* in both Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1593 and fr. 25545. Their co-presence in these two codices led to the suggestion of their shared authorship.¹⁴ In a similar manner, another work was also associated with the female author of the *Ysopet*: *La Manière et facture des Monstres des hommes, qui sont en Orient et plus en Inde*, a vernacular reworking of *De naturis rerum* by Thomas of Cantimpré, found only in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 15106.¹⁵ Charles-Antoine de La Serna Santander was the first to publish this attribution, citing the narrator’s claim at the end of the text to have previously authored ‘*les Fables d’Ysopet*’:

Desormais voel finer cest livre

¹⁰ See Logan Whalen, ‘The Prologues and Epilogues of Marie de France’, in *A Companion to Marie de France*, ed. by Logan E. Whalen (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 1-30. Simon Gaunt notes that whilst in the *Espurgatoire* ‘it is the text that “Marie” ostensibly wishes to save from oblivion’, in the *Ysopet* and *Guigemar* ‘it is the author herself who wishes to be remembered.’ *Retelling the Tale: An Introduction to Medieval French Literature* (London: Duckworth, 2001), p. 50.

¹¹ ‘Tci escriis mon non Marie, / Pur ce ke soie remembre’. This final couplet is preceded by the line ‘Mut par est fol ki se oblie’, also reminiscent of line 8 of the *Ysopet*’s epilogue. See June Hall McCash, ‘*La vie seinte Andree*: a fourth text by Marie de France?’, *Speculum*, 77 (2002): 744-77 (p. 744).

¹² See Baum, pp. 197-99.

¹³ The amalgamation of the patrons of the *Couronnement de Renart* and the *Ysopet* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1446 played a particularly significant role in this construction of ‘Marie’. See my discussion of this manuscript in 3.3.2.

¹⁴ See Carla Rossi, *Marie de France et les érudits de Cantorbéry* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2009), pp. 146-48.

¹⁵ De La Serna Santander also mentions the *Espurgatoire seint Patriz* in the list of works authored by his ‘Marie’ (p. 6). He follows Joseph Gérard, who first linked the work to Marie whilst working on the manuscripts in the library of the Dukes of Burgundy at Brussels. On the history and implications of this attribution, see Mohan Halgrain, “Oëz, seignurs, ke dit Marie”: Autour de quelques indices de “L’affaire Marie de France” qui en leur temps furent oubliés”, in *Philologia ancilla litteraturae. Mélanges de philologie et de littérature françaises du Moyen Âge offerts au Professeur Gilles Eckard par ses collègues et anciens élèves*, ed. by Alain Corbellari, Yan Greub and Marion Uhlig (Geneva: Droz, 2013), pp. 107-26 (pp. 121-23). On the possible links with the author of the *Ysopet*, see Baum, pp. 134-35 and pp. 214-6.

Car je voel rendre delivre
A caus ki amerent le conte
Por cui j'ai mis cest livre en conte
Après les Fables d'Ysopet.¹⁶

However, the narrative suggested by MS Harley 978 and perpetuated by the first published edition soon obscured the thirteenth-century ideas of the *Ysopet*'s author.

In the last forty years there has been a surge in studies that consolidate the twelfth-century construction of 'Marie de France', and in particular, celebrate her authorship of the prized *Lais*.¹⁷ Almost unanimously, they mention the contemporary twelfth-century *Vie seint Edmund le rey* by Denis Piramus, which refers to 'dame Marie' as an author of 'lays'.¹⁸ This reference does not, however, correlate with the figure of Marie as author of Aesopic fables or devotional material.¹⁹ The allure of Marie de France is further reflected by and justified in the numerous studies that have sought to identify her specific poetics and/or the evidence of her distinctive feminine voice, whether in relation to all twelve *lais* as found in MS Harley 978 or to the corpus as a whole.²⁰ Others have attempted to identify the historical Marie, based on a literal or metaphorical reading of the reference to 'de France' in the epilogue to the *Ysopet*.²¹ Most recently, Carla Rossi has added to the speculation over the mysterious 'Marie', and discounted the previous four suspects. In a study that

¹⁶ Charles-Antoine De La Serna Santander, *Mémoire sur la Bibliothèque dite de Bourgogne, présentement Bibliothèque publique de Bruxelles* (Brussels: de Braeckener, 1809), pp. 5-7 (p. 7).

¹⁷ See Glyn S. Burgess, *Marie de France: An Analytical Bibliography* (London: Grant and Cutler, 1977), and *Supplement No. 1* (London: Grant and Cutler, 1986), *Supplement No. 2* (London: Grant and Cutler, 1997) and *Supplement No. 3* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2007).

¹⁸ See Ian Short, 'Denis Piramus and the truth of Marie's *Lais*', *Cultura Neolatina*, 67 (2007): 319-40.

¹⁹ Ian Short suggests that her more 'mature and orthodox accomplishments' are not referred to because they 'had clearly not permeated through to Denis at Bury' and relates this to the potential chronology of both authors' works. 'Denis Piramus', p. 337.

²⁰ Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner argues for the coherence of the *Lais* in 'Textual Identity and Marie de France's *Lais*' in *Shaping Romance: Interpretation Truth, and Closure in Twelfth-Century French Fictions* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), pp. 157-206. On the corpus as a whole, see R. Howard Bloch, *The Anonymous Marie de France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), Logan E. Whalen, *Marie de France and the Poetics of Memory* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), Sharon Kinoshita and Peggy McCracken, *Marie de France: A Critical Companion*, Gallica, 24 (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2012) and *A Companion*.

²¹ For a summary of the postulated Maries, see Mann's 'Appendix 1 Suggested Identifications of Marie de France'. Rossi opposes the reading of 'de France' as Île-de-France (pp. 113-16) and instead sees it as 'une sorte de *posteur d'auteur*', p. 186.

combines linguistic and stylistic analysis with an intricate examination of historical sources, her candidate is Marie Becket, who was nominated the abbess of Barking Abbey two years after the death of her brother, Thomas Becket.²² She bolsters her argument with the compilation of items on Becket in MS Harley 978, and the additional works on his life found with the *Ysopet* in London, BL, MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV (see 3.2.3). Moreover, she cites the content and ownership of the only manuscript of *La Vie seinte Audree* as a further crutch in her argument. It is found in London, BL, MS Additional 70513, a thirteenth-century compilation of hagiographic works that is otherwise known as the ‘Campsey Collection’, having been owned and read by nuns at the Augustinian convent at Campsey, Suffolk, in the fourteenth century. The manuscript includes other items by female authors, including Clemence of Barking and an anonymous nun from Barking.²³

Yet mostly, the manuscripts complicate the established narrative of Marie de France’s authorship and corpus. As Keith Busby acknowledges, the material witnesses of ‘her perceived *œuvre*’ are characterised by their ‘untidiness’:

The canonization of Marie’s texts, the orderly circumscription of her perceived *œuvre* into neatly structured works of unchallenged attribution, not to mention the codicological decontextualization effected by the modern critical edition, are all questioned, if not entirely belied, by a varied and untidy corpus of manuscripts.²⁴

Despite the expressed caution, Busby continues to read the manuscripts through the prism of ‘Marie de France’ and MS Harley 978. Indeed, few scholars have dared to challenge the veracity of the corpus even when faced with the ‘untidy’ material evidence. Richard Baum and Bernadette Masters have both called attention to the implications of the instability of the attributions to ‘Marie’ in the codices of the

²² Mann’s *From Aesop to Reynard* was published in the same year as Rossi’s study and therefore Rossi’s new identification of Marie is not featured in Mann’s appendix.

²³ See Rossi, pp. 156-76.

²⁴ ‘The Manuscripts of Marie de France’, in *A Companion*, pp. 303-17, pp. 316-17.

Lais.²⁵ Baum disputes the accepted opinion that all twelve *lais* represent a compilation by Marie, through an internal examination of the narratives and by underlining the uniqueness of their compilation in MS Harley 978. He does not deny the possibility that there may once have been an author called Marie who compiled a collection of *lais*.²⁶ However, Baum questions whether this same author composed the *Ysopet* and/or the *Espurgatoire*.²⁷

Masters goes one step further than Baum, undermining the concept of the author and the integrity of the story collections attributed to ‘Marie’. In her controversial and frequently overlooked study of ‘manuscripture’ (*l’art créateur pratiqué par les scribes médiévaux*), she offers an alternative approach to the modern notions of composition and authorship, which regard the work of the scribe as hindering our access to the ‘authorial’ text.²⁸ Instead, she argues for the value of each manuscript witness, using the twelve *lais* in MS Harley 978 as her primary case study. Rather than the creation of an individualised author, the collection represents the product of a chain of *exécutants*, a community of interchangeable readers and makers, who participate within a tradition that they maintain, perpetuate and innovate. Masters thus challenges the concept and existence of a single author figure, and at the same time, undermines the integrity of the twelve *lais* as a distinct work. In the same vein, she briefly addresses the variation ‘sur le plan du choix, du nombre et

²⁵ Bernadette A. Masters, *Esthétique et Manuscripture: Le “Moulin à paroles” au moyen âge* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1992). Halgrain, who is currently preparing a new edition of the *Ysopet*, explores the lack of ‘objective’ evidence surrounding Marie de France, in an article influenced by Baum (but not Masters), see ‘L’affaire Marie de France’.

²⁶ Masters sees Baum as haunted by the ‘fantôme’ of Marie (p. 109). Rossi, on the other hand, reads Baum’s Marie as an *auctoritas* rather than an authentic *auctor* (p. 13, note 1).

²⁷ Baum suggests starting with the manuscripts of the *Ysopet* to establish whether the *Ysopet*, *Espurgatoire* and *Vie sainte Andree* were the work of the same author, see pp. 193-96. Rossi disputes Baum’s arguments on the *Espurgatoire*, which are based on the erroneous dating of its source text, the *Tractatus de Purgatorio*. See p. 149 and pp. 199-200.

²⁸ Masters, p. vii.

de l'ordre des fables' in the manuscripts of the *Ysopet*.²⁹ Masters rightly underlines the pitfalls of reifying a single arrangement of either story collection, as has been argued in chapter 2 in relation to Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1546 and the *Vie des Pères*.³⁰ Yet, the *Ysopet* and the two other story collections examined in this thesis have identifiable trends in transmission, totally different from the inconsistencies of the 'textual tradition' of the *Lais*. Despite their heterogeneity, the manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères* nonetheless suggest the identity and integrity of the 'first' form of the collection. There are striking differences in the order and arrangement of the *Ysopet* (particularly in the earliest and latest witnesses of the textual tradition). Moreover, Gabriella Parussa describes the high degree of scribal intervention in vernacular fable collections – especially in the morals – as an inherent part of the copying tradition.³¹ Yet at the same time, the textual tradition of the *Ysopet* demonstrates notable degrees of stability, especially in the series of fables numbered 1 to 30 and 50 to 102 (see Appendix 3: Table 3.2). Furthermore, the interplay with independent narratives is hardly excessive.³² Masters reminds us to recognise the idiosyncrasies of each manuscript witness of a story collection. Moreover, by evening out the hierarchy of participants involved in the creation of a medieval book, she gives value to the individual copy and challenges modern approaches to medieval textual composition and dissemination. Yet, at the same time, it is also productive to engage with the 'traditional' aspects of the textual tradition, the integrity suggested by the collective written witnesses, whether they result from the meaningful (or accidental) intervention of the original 'author' or subsequent compilers and scribes. To these

²⁹ Ibid., p. 111. For a list of the order of fables in each manuscript see Appendix 3: Table 3.2. In Baum's brief chapter on the *Ysopet*, he primarily focuses on the history of its scholarly reception (pp. 197-216).

³⁰ Masters, p. 113.

³¹ 'Les "Livres des fables"'. *Enquête sur les manuscrits médiévaux contenant des fables ésopiques*, *Reinardus*, 13 (2000): 149-67, p. 161.

³² For a list of the corresponding titles and roman numerals see Appendix 3: Table 3.1. All of the items extraneous to the *Ysopet* are marked in red in Appendix 3: Table 3.2. See also note 59 below.

ends, the techniques of Lachmanian stemmatology can offer insights into the traces and developments of such variation, without necessitating their hierarchisation.

Furthermore, Masters's approach does not give weight to the emerging importance of authorship in the compilation of vernacular manuscripts towards the end of the thirteenth century.³³ She limits the potential function and reception of the attribution to 'Marie' in the collection of *lais* and the *Ysopet*, contending that in both cases it represents 'une allusion littéraire de nature purement conventionnelle', which serves as a sign of an alternative vernacular and *lay* authority.³⁴ Yet this only represents one extreme in the continuum of possibility. Sarah Kay takes a more nuanced approach to the texts attributed to Chrétien de Troyes. Whilst exploring the possible resonances of reading 'Crestien' as a way of understanding what it means to be *Christian*, she does not discount the possibility that audiences may have known and recognised in the name an extra-textual author.³⁵ In the decades and centuries that followed the initial circulation of the *Ysopet*, it is evident that 'Marie' had multiple functions and connotations for the manuscript makers and their readers, whether as an empirical figure or otherwise.³⁶

This brief history of the reception of Marie de France has been sketched as a reminder of the preconceptions underlying the modern responses to the texts attributed to this author figure. The principal concern of this chapter is not Marie de France, nor the boundaries of her corpus, but the reading experiences suggested by

³³ For an introduction to this phenomenon see the forthcoming collaborative article by members of the Hera-funded 'Dynamics' project, Bart Besamusca et al., 'Author Attributions in Medieval Text Collections: An Exploration'.

³⁴ Masters, p. 145. For similar readings of 'Marie'/the feminine voice as literary play see Cerquiglini, pp. 48-54; and Jean-Charles Huchet, 'Nom de femme et écriture féminine au Moyen Âge: Les *Lais* de Marie de France', *Poétique*, 48 (1981): 407-30.

³⁵ Kay herself briefly suggests that the female equivalent might be 'Marie'. See 'Who was Chrétien de Troyes?', *Arthurian Literature XV*, ed. by James P. Carley and Felicity Riddy (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), pp. 1-35, especially p. 3 and p. 32.

³⁶ The Burgundian codex, London, BL, MS Harley 4333, approximates the 'Marie' of the *Ysopet* with the Virgin through the juxtaposition of the epilogue and an *Ave Maria*, beginning 'Molt hautement se maria / En vos dame auez maria' (fol. 96ra). Similarly, in Paris, Ars., MS 3142, the 'Marie' of the *Ysopet* parallels the Virgin and the manuscript's possible first owner, Marie de Brabant (see below, 3.3.2).

the manuscripts in which we find the *Ysopet*. Rather than approaching the manuscripts from the perspective of Marie de France, each witness of the textual tradition of the *Ysopet* will be the starting point for investigating the role and function of authorship in manuscript compilation. How does the presentation of authorship affect the reading experience of the *Ysopet*? How does its dissemination develop over time and space? The attribution of authorship in the epilogue is conspicuous within the fable tradition, and even more so because she is a woman.³⁷ Thus in addition to the presence of the author ‘Marie’, the implications of the postured feminine voice are significant, especially in a tradition associated with male *auctores*, and in particular Aesop. The gendering and identity of the authorial voice are not, however, consistent in all of the copies of the *Ysopet*, and the main body of this chapter will illustrate how the shifting presence of the author relates to temporal and regional trends in the compilation of the *Ysopet*. Before turning to the manuscripts, I will first briefly address the specific nature of the *Ysopet*’s presentation of authorship in its prologue and epilogue.

3.1.2 The *Ysopet*’s Framework of Authorship: A New Feminine Dynasty

A distinctive prologue and epilogue situate the *Ysopet* within a chain of *translatio* that implicates the notions of authorship and gender. This master structure frames up to one hundred and two fables.³⁸ The first forty fables are translated from the *Romulus Nilantii*, and sixty-two further fables originate in other known and unidentified

³⁷ Mann, p. 54.

³⁸ This number is based on Warnke’s edition, which is being used as a basis for labeling the fables. Fables XI and LXV are at times presented as two separate units. On the boundaries between fables, see Sahar Amer, *Ésope au féminin: Marie de France et la politique de l’interculturalité* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), p. 82.

sources, including the *Romulus vulgaris*.³⁹ The iterative framework of the individual fables is enclosed by the extradiegetic framing passages, which characterise and legitimise the vernacular author's contribution to the fable tradition. Before the disclosure of Marie's name in the epilogue, the audience is already subtly introduced to the feminine voice in the prologue. The female translator is quietly presented after her male predecessors and patron. However, by the epilogue, this same voice writes with a clear sense of her own authority, creating a narrative of her authorship. The extradiegetic framing passages will be examined as they are found in MS Harley 978, which will inform the analysis of this manuscript in the next section (3.2.2). In most cases, the manuscripts with the prologue and the epilogue resemble the content of MS Harley 978.⁴⁰

The first half of the *Ysopet*'s prologue evokes the classical fable tradition in order to facilitate, integrate and authorise the medieval translator's participation. The initial eleven lines concern the didactic agenda and responsibility of 'li philosophe', whose example the author implicitly perpetuates through their own act of writing:⁴¹

Cil ki seiuent de lettrure
 Deurent bien metre cure
 Es bons liures . e escriz
 E as samples . e as diz
 Ke li philosophe trouerent
 E escristrent . e remembrerent
 Par moralite escriueient
 Les bons prouerbes quil oieient
 Que cil amender se peussent
 Ki lur entente en bien eussent
 Ceo firent li ancien pere (MS Harley 978, fol. 40ra [= 'Prologus', ll. 1-11])

³⁹ See Karl Warnke, 'Die Quellen des Esope der Marie de France', *Forschungen zur romanischen Philologie. Festgabe für Hermann Suchier zum 15. März 1900* (Halle a/S.: Niemeyer, 1900), pp. 161-284. On the history of the beast fable see Mann, 'Introduction', pp. 1-27.

⁴⁰ See Warnke's edition for the variant readings. MS Harley 978 is Warnke's base manuscript, but due to the degree of emendation I have chosen to transcribe the manuscript directly. On the merits and pitfalls of the published editions of the *Ysopet* see Richard Trachsler, 'Les *Fables* de Marie de France. Manuscrits et éditions', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 44 (2001): 45-63.

⁴¹ I am using third-person plural pronouns to refer to the narrator before her gender is made known, in order to explore the effects of reading the text with no prior knowledge of its authorship.

Instead of the pious fathers of the Egyptian desert evoked in the *Vie des Pères*, ‘li ancien pere’ here represent the classical *auctores*, exemplary for their pedagogy. Whilst certain sources were received aurally (‘Les bons *prouerbes* quil oieient’, l. 8), the predominant focus is on the *written* retransmission that assures the *remembrance* of their teachings, and their influence on future generations. Moreover, it also assures the legacy of those involved. The first cited *auctor*, Romulus, whose pedagogic exchange with his son is written, follows the tradition of the *Romulus vulgaris*:⁴²

Romulus ki fu emperere
a sun fiz escrit si manda
e par essample li mustra
cum il se deust cun^{re} guater
Que hum nel pust enginner (MS Harley 978, fol. 40ra [= ‘Prologus’, ll. 12-15])

The nature of the education is pragmatic, characterised by its emphasis on how to armour oneself within the society of other men, recalling the central concerns of the father-son/master-student exchange of the *Disciplina* (and *Fables Pierre Aufons*).⁴³ The focus then switches from the pedagogic parenting of the emperor Romulus to the Greek slave and originary forefather of the fable tradition, who *wrote* for/to his ‘master’ in the second illustration of the didactic written agenda put forth in the prologue’s first lines:

Esop escrist a sun mestre
Que bien cunust lui . e sun estre
Vnes fables ke ot trouees
De griu en latin *translatees*
Merueille en eurent li plusur
Quil mist sun sen en tel labur
Mes ni ad fable de folie
V. il nen ait philosophie
[Es] *essamples* ki sunt apres
V. des cuntes est tut li fes (MS Harley 978, fol. 40ra [= ‘Prologus’, ll. 17-26])

⁴² The Latin fable collection begins with a letter from the eponymous emperor to his son Tiberinus, stating that he has translated the fables from Greek to Latin for his son’s ‘amusement and profit’. Mann, p. 7.

⁴³ Kinoshita and McCracken see the *Ysopet* as ‘one node in a wide-ranging text network’, including the *Disciplina*, that sees ‘wisdom literature’ enter Latin Europe, pp. 37-38. Indeed, numerous teachings and narratives in the *Ysopet* recall those found in the *Disciplina*, such as fables XLIV and XLV on the ruses of unfaithful wives.

Aesop is the one responsible for the discovery (or composition?) of the fables ('Vnes fables ke ot trouees', l. 19), their translation (l. 20), and written transmission (l. 17).⁴⁴ The bewilderment that he would invest his 'sen' (l. 22) in 'fable de folie' (l. 23) is countered by their intrinsic worth. Like the 'deduit' in the prologue to the *Fables Pierre Aufons*, they are ripe with 'philosophie' (l. 24). The inherent virtue of his work thus conquers the 'merueille' of the doubters ('li plusur', l. 21). The same sense of vindication is emulated in the presentation of authorship that spans the prologue and epilogue of the *Ysopet*.

After recounting the history of the tradition and its ethos, the attention turns to the role of the contemporary author. As Aesop wrote to/for his master, contemporary authors are obliged to 'rhyme' fables at the behest of their esteemed patrons, in the third projected pairing:

A mei ki dei la rime faire
 Nauenist nient a retraire
 plusurs paroles *que* i sunt
 mes nep~~ur~~uc cil me sumunt
 ki flurs est de cheualerie
 Denseignement de *curteisie*
 E *quant* tel hume me ad *requisite*
 Ne uoil lesser en nule guise
Que ni mete *trauail* . e peine
 ki *que* men tienge *pur* uileine
 De fere mut pur sa preere
 Si comenceraï la premere
 Des fables ke esopus *escrist*
que a sun mestre manda . e dist (MS Harley 978, fol. 40ra-b [= 'Prologus', ll. 27-40])

These lines reveal the unexpected and intriguing prospect of a female participant in the chain of *translatio*. In the first instance ('e *quant* tel hume me ad *requisite*', l. 33), the direct object pronoun 'me' is shown to command a feminine agreement. It occurs on the rhyme, as does the second instance of the feminine voice betrayed by the

⁴⁴ A pen-flourished initial highlights line 17 in the majority of codices, which indicates the importance of the introduction of Aesop's name to the manuscripts' makers and readers. However, this line is unmarked in MS Harley 978 (and the closely related codex, Oxford, Bodl., MS Douce 132 (see 3.2.2)), a divergence that is significant given the prominence of Marie's authorship in the codex.

adjective ‘uileine’ (l. 36). The two feminine rhymes are resistant to modification without the significant alteration of the content of each line, which attests to their integral function in the prologue.⁴⁵ Indeed, in the cases where copyists have sought to remove the female author, these lines are either omitted (Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25406) or replaced (Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2168). Significantly, the lines that disclose the feminine voice simultaneously express her coercion, and vulnerability. She would not have undertaken the task if ‘tel hume’ (l. 33) had not asked her; the male patron is thus given the agency. Moreover, in applying herself to such an undertaking, there is a chance that she will be reproached (‘*que men tienge pur uileine*’, l. 36). Similar exclamations are common in male-authored prologues, such as the subservience of ‘Crestiens’ to ‘ma dame de Chanpaigne’ in the *Chevalier de la Charrette*, or the fear of hostility expressed in the sequel to the *Fables Pierre Aufons* in Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 7517 (see 1.4.2).⁴⁶ Yet, they gain a particular pertinence when articulated by a feminine voice on her entrance into the masculine written culture of the fable tradition. By insisting on the subservience to her patron, the female narrator indirectly legitimises and authorises her participation no matter the scorn she might face.

By contrast in the epilogue, the feminine voice and its legitimacy are asserted through a notable shift in stance. After completing her designated task, she is ready for her contribution and identity to be recognised and remembered:

Al finement de cest escrit
que en romanz ai treite . e dit
 Me numerai *pur* remembrance
 Marie ai nun si sui de *france*⁴⁷
 Put cel estre *que* clerc plusur

⁴⁵ These lines are ‘impossible à falsifier sans modification “lourde”’, in contrast to the feminine rhymes of the General Prologue of the *Lais* according to Halgrain, ‘L’affaire Marie de France’, p. 108, note 3.

⁴⁶ Chrétien de Troyes, *Lancelot ou Le Chevalier de la Charrette*, ed. by Jean-Claude Aubailly (Paris: Flammarion, 1991), ll. 1-29 (l. 1).

⁴⁷ In British Library, MS Harley 4333 it reads ‘fui’ (fol. 96ra) rather than ‘sui’. This is also the case in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25406, in which the epilogue was added by a post-medieval hand.

prendreient sur eus mun labur
 Ne uoil *que* nul sur li le die
 Cil fet *que* fol ki sei ublie⁴⁸ *** (MS Harley 978, fol. 67rb [= ‘Epilogus’, ll. 1-8])⁴⁹

The efforts of Aesop are replaced by the expression of her own ‘labur’ (l. 6). No longer anxious about the potential hostility of others, her concerns now relate to the possibility that ‘clerc plusur’ (l. 5) might appropriate her work. By naming herself, she attempts to brand her work and to stake her claim. She is the ‘essample’ of what could be termed the *Ysopet*’s final teaching, expressed in the line – highlighted in this codex – ‘Cil fet *que* fol ki sei ublie’ (l. 8).

The order of actants in the prologue is chiastically reversed in the epilogue, giving prominence to the naming of the female author. Her patron is identified after Marie’s self-attribution:⁵⁰

Pur amur le cunte Willame
 Le plus uaillant de nul realme
 Meintenteneur de cest liure feire
 e. del engleis en romanz treire
 Esope apelum cest liure ***
 Quil *translata* .e. fist escrire
 Del griu en latin le turna
 Li reis alurez *que* mut lama
 Le *translata* puis en engleis
 e. ieo lai rimee en *franceis* ***
 Si cum ieo poi plus *proprement*
 Ore pri a deu omnipotent ***
 ke a tel oure puisse entendre
Que a lui pusse malme rendre (MS Harley 978, fol. 67rb [= ‘Epilogus’, ll. 9-22])

Aesop becomes the name of the book, and King Alfred intrudes the chain of *translatio*.⁵¹ Indeed, it is only at this point that the *English* book is referred to as the

⁴⁸ In Warnke’s edition, this line reads ‘cil uevre mal ki sei ublie’. On the relationship of this line to identified proverbs, see Halgrain, ‘L’affaire Marie de France’, p. 116.

⁴⁹ In Harley 978, the manuscript’s makers highlight four key lines of the epilogue with an undulating red line, marked here by ‘***’.

⁵⁰ Rossi suggests that ‘le cunte Willame’ was Guillaume de Mandeville, one of the witnesses of the nomination of Marie as abbess of Barking, whose background is shown to fit the profile of the patron (pp. 188-90).

⁵¹ Alfred is, however, a ‘floating’ presence in the manuscripts. See Françoise Vieliard, ‘Sur la tradition manuscrite des fables de Marie de France’, *Bibliothèque de l’École des chartes*, 147 (1989): 371-97, pp. 373-74.

direct source of the *French verse* translation. Whether this source is factually accurate or not is of less concern than the way it postures ‘Marie’ through her act of *translatio* as a multilingual author able to transcend linguistic, geographic and temporal boundaries. However, this characterisation is not reflected in her written dissemination with the *Ysopet*.

The fear ‘*que clerz plusur /prendreient sur eus mun labur*’ (ll. 5-6) is actualised in the manuscripts of the *Ysopet*, in which the status of the female author fluctuates. The framework of authorship varies in the same manner as the arrangement, selection, and content of the fables, the principal divergences occurring in the earliest and latest witnesses of the tradition. Whilst the prologue is almost always present, the epilogue is absent from ten of the twenty-five medieval copies of the *Ysopet* (see Appendix 3: Table 3.3).⁵² Three of these manuscripts are English and include two of the earliest witnesses of the tradition. The absence of the epilogue in these instances could be seen to undermine its authenticity. However, the presence of the prologue’s feminine voice is significant, demonstrating its important role from the initial stages of the *Ysopet*’s circulation. In four of the later manuscripts without the epilogue, the feminine voice of the prologue is suppressed, through the neutering of this voice (BnF, f. fr. 2168 and fr. 25406), or the complete omission of the prologue (Paris, f. fr. 4939 and fr. 24310, see 3.4.2). In addition to the variation in the content of the *Ysopet*, the iconographic representations of Marie also affect her role and prominence.

The different responses to the female author revealed by the manuscripts will be read in relation to the *mouvance* of the *Ysopet*, the material it is compiled with, and the visual presentation of the codex. Previous studies of the manuscripts of the

⁵² This figure includes Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25406, in which a post-medieval hand added the epilogue, and two mutilated copies: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25545 (leaves are missing after fable LXXVIII of the *Ysopet* and it is therefore unknown if the epilogue was once present); all that remains of the Vatican copy is the first quire (see 3.3.2).

Ysopet have not explored the question of authorship in relation to how it is compiled, nor how this might relate to broader diachronic and regional tendencies.⁵³ The manuscripts of the *Ysopet* are here analysed according to geographical provenance and the period in which they were made, as these factors have repercussions on the dissemination and compilation of the fable collection.

3.2 The *Ysopet* in England: Booklets, Becket and the *mouvante* Marie

The insular manuscripts of the *Ysopet* include some of the oldest witnesses of the textual tradition. They illustrate three stages in the production and compilation of manuscripts containing French works in England. The earliest copies of the *Ysopet* date from the dawn of the thirteenth century, and feature in discrete codicological units defined by Pamela Robinson as ‘booklets’.⁵⁴ Two later codices exemplify the compilation of such portable units into personal ‘libraries’. They include almost identical copies of the *Ysopet* produced by professional scribes working in Oxford in the 1260s (MS Harley 978 and Oxford, Bodl., MS Douce 132), and it is this version of the fable collection that reaches the Continent. By contrast, the other three English copies have significantly fewer fables than the hundred and two found in MS Harley 978 and do not include the epilogue with its famous attribution to ‘Marie’. Given the striking variation in the English witnesses of the *Ysopet* and the marginality of Marie, the exceptional nature of MS Harley 978 becomes more visible. The latest English manuscript of the *Ysopet*, London, BL, MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV, is the

⁵³ For example, George C. Keidel, ‘The History of French Fable Manuscripts’, *PMLA*, 24 (1909): 207-19; Parussa, ‘Les “Livres des fables”’; and Mohan Halgrain, ‘Quelques remaques sur l’environnement textuel de l’*Isopet* de Marie de France’, *Vox Romanica*, 69 (2010): 141-55.

⁵⁴ ‘The “Booklet”: A Self-contained Unit in Composite Manuscripts’, offprint from *Codicologica*, 3, *Essais typologiques*, ed. by A. Gruys (Leiden: 1980). Since Robinson’s pioneering article, Andrew Taylor highlights how little has been written about the influence of this type of manufacture on the dissemination of Latin and Anglo-Norman texts in England in the thirteenth century. See ‘British Library MS Harley 978’, in *Textual Situations: Three Medieval Manuscripts and Their Readers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp. 76-136, p. 98.

only organic manuscript compilation in this group. Whilst the copy of the *Ysopet* is similar to one of the earlier booklets, the thematic links that unite this multi-text codex impart a suggestive role to the fable collection.

3.2.1 The Early Dissemination

The earliest copies of the *Ysopet* are found in portable booklets that were bound and rebound with other items over the course of the Middle Ages. The specific nature of this type of manufacture and dissemination influences the stability of the textual tradition. As Robinson notes, '[t]he circulation of a text in "booklet" form is likely to lead to a multiplicity of versions as each collector adapts the copy produced by his predecessor'.⁵⁵ York, Minster Library, MS XVI. K. 12 (Part 1) and Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.6.11 contain the earliest copies of the *Ysopet* and the divergences between the two witnesses of the textual tradition provide a clear example of the 'multiplicity' encouraged by this mode of dissemination. Before looking at the codicological contexts of the *Ysopet* in these two codices, I will first address the nature of their divergences and how they relate to the broader textual tradition.

The York copy is particularly anomalous for its configuration of the *Ysopet* and the inclusion of a series of fables found in no other extant copy. Fables from the beginning, middle and final series of the *Ysopet* (as found in MS Harley 978) are mixed together creating a unique arrangement distinct from all of the other copies (see Appendix 3: Table 3.2). Most copies replicate the arrangement of the first forty fables that originate in the *Romulus Nilantii*. Indeed, the order in which they are found in the Latin fable collection seems to have had a hold over their dissemination in the

⁵⁵ Robinson, p. 61.

vernacular, in the same manner as the *Disciplina* appears to have influenced the transmission of the *FPA*. However, in the York copy the fables that originate in the *Romulus Nilantii* are separated into two series. The selection and arrangement of the fables is not the only indicator that the York copy of the *Ysopet* represents the work of a particularly enthusiastic redactor. The anomalous presence of nine fables from the tradition of Avianus further supports this hypothesis.⁵⁶ As with the *Romulus* tradition, fables from the collection attributed to the Latin author Avianus also circulated in French. However, those in the York codex are distinct from the later French *Avionnets*. They feature after the second series of fables that originate in the *Romulus Nilantii*, and between the final two fables of the *Ysopet* in this copy (XXXVIII, fol. 19vb; LXXI, fols 22rb-vb). There is no differentiation between the presentation of the fables from the tradition of Avianus and those more commonly associated with *Ysopet*. Each fable is introduced by a two-line-high red initial and the moral is marked by one-line-high red initial.⁵⁷ In terms of their content, they are also not intrinsically distinguishable. Their language resembles the dichotomies of the *Ysopet* (*vilain* and *curteis*; *engin* and *avoir*), and the often humorous tone of the narratives, such as *De calvo* (Av. X, fols 21vb-22ra), in which a bald knight creates a hairpiece from the scalp of a dead man and then loses it during a tournament. Could they have been part of the original *Ysopet*? In light of the exceptional nature of this copy within the textual tradition, it seems more likely that they represent an early but less successful *remaniement* of the *Ysopet*.⁵⁸ Whereas the *Vie des Pères* is frequently

⁵⁶ Warnke publishes all nine fables at the end of his edition, 'Anhang II. Das Yorker Avianfragment', pp. 341-54.

⁵⁷ All of the initials are coloured in red ink apart from the third fable of the *Ysopet*, for which the initial is coloured green (fol. 1rb). In the fables from the tradition of Avianus, the only exception is *De thesauro* (Av. XII, fol. 22ra-rb), which does not have a moral marked: the conclusion of the narrative sums up the *vilain*'s lesson. Green ink is also used to decorate the large red initial that introduces the prologue.

⁵⁸ Further philological study is required to decipher their potential provenance. See Halgrain on the 'troubling resemblances' between *De cane* (Av. VII, fol. 21ra-b) and the prologue of *Guigemar* found in MS Harley 978, 'L'affaire Marie de France', pp. 119-21 (p. 120).

extended with *unica* or miracles from Gautier's collection, this type of augmentation is less common in the manuscripts of the *Ysopet*.⁵⁹ In the case of the York codex, the *remaniement* could be seen as a precocious example of the fourteenth-century *Isopet-Avionnet*, which combines the two traditions (see 3.4.2).

Whereas the York copy contains a significant range of fables, the Cambridge *Ysopet* is primarily formed of the first sixty-nine fables in MS Harley 978. However, it includes the final fable in the majority of copies, *De femina et gallina* (CII), within the series of fables from the *Romulus Nilantii* (between XVI and XVII, see Appendix 3: Table 3.2). Whilst the arrangement resembles the more extensive version of the fable collection, its contents are nearest to the latest English codex, MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV. These two copies thus reveal the circulation of a significantly shorter form of the *Ysopet* in England throughout the thirteenth century. Like the York manuscript, the start and moral of each fable in the Cambridge copy is marked by a coloured initial. This form of paratextual division becomes a hallmark of the manuscripts of the *Ysopet*.⁶⁰ The Cambridge copy also includes rubricated titles in Latin for the individual fables, a tendency that is not replicated in any of the other codices, and indicates the particularly learned status of the *Ysopet* in this context.⁶¹

The York and Cambridge codices share similar histories of compilation, characteristic of the circulation and the consumption of booklets in England. Both copies of the *Ysopet* are compiled with Anglo-Norman saints' lives, whether in the same booklet or in an additional self-contained gathering. The York *Ysopet* was

⁵⁹ The five additional manuscripts that include extraneous narratives not otherwise found in the *Ysopet* are: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173 (and its copy Coligny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, MS 113), fr. 12603, fr. 14971, and fr. 4939. In fr. 14971, two supplementary fables are copied after the epilogue but feature within the table of contents for the *Ysopet* at the beginning of the codex. An additional fable and title for another occur at the end of the *Ysopet* in fr. 4939. In the case of fr. 2173, the two narratives integrated into the *Ysopet* are *fabliaux* (see 3.3.1). All additional items are marked in red in Appendix 3: Table 3.2.

⁶⁰ In MS Harley 978 and MS Douce 132, the moral is marked by a *pied-de-mouche*. See Busby, *Codex and Context*, p. 214.

⁶¹ In MS Douce 132, Latin titles are added in the margins by a later hand.

produced in a booklet of thirty-six folios with the twelfth-century Anglo-Norman *Voyage de saint Brendan* attributed to Benedeit (fols 23ra-36r).⁶² This booklet dates to the beginning of the thirteenth century (or possibly even earlier).⁶³ There is evidence that it was once bound with two other thirteenth-century booklets of almost exactly the same portable size, which contained additional saints' lives, a devotional piece and Latin sermon. The three booklets were recorded as a single codex in the library of eighteenth-century collector, Reverend Dr Marmaduke Fothergill, before being separated early in the nineteenth century.⁶⁴ In contrast to the York copy, the Cambridge copy of the *Ysopet* occurs in a booklet of three quires with no other material. This booklet is bound with two Anglo-Norman saints' lives, which were copied in two separate quires in the second half of the thirteenth century: the *Vie de seinte Margarete* (fols 1r-8r) in alexandrines (distinct from the version in York, Minster Library, MS XVI. K. 13), and an anonymous *Purgatoire de saint Patrice* (fols 9ra-21rb) in octosyllabic rhyming couplets.⁶⁵ Busby views the compilation of the three extant items in the Cambridge codex as being influenced by knowledge of the author:

an association of Marie with Æsopic material and with the legend of Patrick's Purgatory led to the post-production assembly of the two texts, even though

⁶² The *Voyage* begins after the *Ysopet* on the final folio of the third quire. Benedeit, *The Anglo-Norman Voyage of St. Brendan*, ed. by Ian Short and Brian Merrilees (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1979).

⁶³ Whilst Warnke (p. iv) and Ker date the script to the thirteenth century, Short and Merrilees suggest it was produced late in the twelfth century (p. 7).

⁶⁴ See Neil. R. Ker and Alan J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 4: *Paisley – York* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 731-32; and also Frederic Spencer, 'The Old French Manuscripts of York Minster Library', *Modern Language Notes*, 3.8 (1888): 244-48, pp. 246-48. York, Minster Library, MS XVI. K. 13 (Part 2) is the longest extant unit, and includes William of Waddington's *Manuel des Pechiez* and two saints' lives (*Vie de seint Eustace* and *Vie de seinte Margarete*) plus a fragment of a third (*Vie de seinte Marie Magdalene*). The third unit (York, Minster Library, MS XVI. K. 14) comprises only 6 folios of an incomplete copy of Robert de Gretham's Latin sermons on the Sunday Gospels, known as *Le Miroir* or *Les Evangiles des domnées*.

⁶⁵ *Étude sur le Purgatoire de saint Patrice accompagnée du texte latin d'Utrecht et du texte anglo-normand de Cambridge*, ed. by C. M. Van der Zanden (Amsterdam: H. J. Paris, 1927). On the dating of the two saints' lives see Paul Meyer, *Les Manuscrits français de Cambridge*, vol. II (extracted from *Romania*, 15) (Paris: 1886), pp. 268-70. Meyer suggests that the two saints' lives represent one codicological unit. Whilst it is possible they were copied by different scribes, the difference between the size of their quires is slight (120 x 175 mm and 125 x 175 mm). The booklet with the *Ysopet* is comparatively larger (138 x 178 mm).

the particular version of the story of Owein is not hers and the epilogue of the *Ysopet* wanting.⁶⁶

It is tenuously possible that this French fable collection, exceptional both for the feminine voice of the prologue and its circulation in England, could have been recognised and associated with the extratextual 'Marie' of the absent epilogue, and that her renown extended beyond the century in which she supposedly lived. However, the fact that only a single extant manuscript of the *Espurgatoire* remains and also given the number of different renditions of Owein's adventures in circulation, it is unlikely that 'Marie' had the same association with this legendary tale. The arrangement according to authorship thus represents an unlikely assumption and one shaped by the modern construction of the author.

Like the York manuscript, there is evidence to suggest that the Cambridge codex was part of a longer compilation. According to the catalogue published in 1600, which corresponds to the list of contents copied on one of the paper flyleaves, three other pieces once circulated with the three extant items, before the nineteenth-century catalogue was published.⁶⁷ In addition to the two saints' lives and the *Ysopet*, the items listed include: a sermon on almsgiving and *contemptus mundi*; a *Cato* text with commentary; and a French verse *Vie de saint Grégoire*. As with the York compilation, it is unclear at what point these booklets were compiled, but we might speculate in both cases that they were bound together by the end of the medieval period. The similar biographies of the York and Cambridge codices demonstrate how the early (and anonymous) copies of the *Ysopet* circulated with and amongst primarily religious and learned material in highly mobile booklets. This mode of manufacture and of

⁶⁶ Busby, 'The Manuscripts', p. 316.

⁶⁷ See Thomas James, ed., *Ecloga Oxonio-Cantabrigiensis in Libros duos* (London: Bishop & Norton, 1600), p. 64, no. 181; and Charles Hardwick, ed., *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1857), pp. 260-61.

acquisition distinguishes the English copies of the *Ysopet* from their continental counterparts.

3.2.2 The Oxford Booklets: Personal Libraries and the Critical Lure of London, BL, MS Harley 978

In the middle of the thirteenth century, a longer form of the *Ysopet*, with up to one hundred and two fables and the epilogue, was being copied in commercial scriptoria in Oxford.⁶⁸ Two of the copies that emerged from this milieu during the 1260s are found today in MS Douce 132 and MS Harley 978. They contain the earliest English witnesses of the attribution to ‘Marie’, and the form of the *Ysopet* that reaches the Continent.⁶⁹ In addition to the similarities in content, they also share evident visual parallels (see figs III, 1 and 2).⁷⁰ Whilst they were produced in similar sized gatherings to the earlier booklets of the *Ysopet*, the copies were bound shortly after their acquisition and were compiled to form two unique personal ‘libraries’. Together they bear witness to the commercialisation of book production in England and the widening readership of such portable books.⁷¹ Based on its contents, MS Douce 132 appears to have been originally owned by an unidentified lawyer from Berkshire.⁷²

Rather than a layman, the compiler of MS Harley 978 is believed to have been

William of Winchester, a Benedictine monk, whose colourful personal life has been

⁶⁸ Their activities have been located to Catte Street, see Taylor, p. 94.

⁶⁹ The main difference between the two copies is that MS Douce 132 lacks MS Harley 978’s *De agno et capra* (XXXII). However, this fable is found in three continental codices with the same number of fables as MS Harley 978: Paris, Ars., MS 3142, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2168 and fr. 1593. The arrangement of the first two closely resembles MS Harley 978, but two of the one hundred and two fables are found in an alternative position (III and XLIX) and fr. 2168 does not include the epilogue. Fr. 1593 has the same number of fables but a significantly different arrangement. The arrangement of the *Ysopet* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1822 also closely follows MS Harley 978, apart from the divergence caused by a mutilation between folios 83 and 89.

⁷⁰ Despite the comparable *mise en page*, the codices are of different proportions: MS Douce 132 is the largest of all the English manuscripts of the *Ysopet*, measuring 40 mm taller and 40 mm wider than MS Harley 978, which is of comparable size to the York and Cambridge manuscripts.

⁷¹ See Taylor, pp. 94–95.

⁷² Robinson suggests that the contents may have ‘represented his entire library’, p. 56.

linked to his reading habits.⁷³ The idiosyncrasies inherent in such a mode of compilation generate two contrasting contexts for the *Ysopet*. I will begin by addressing the booklets that form the Douce manuscript before turning to MS Harley 978 and the narrative it constructs of Marie's authorship.

MS Douce 132 provides another example of the circulation and re-compilation of discrete booklets. The two booklets in MS Douce 132 once formed a fourteenth-century composite compilation with the four booklets in Oxford, Bodl., MS Douce 137 (see Appendix 3: Table 3.4).⁷⁴ The list of contents (MS Douce 137, fol. 4v) written by the first owner indicates that the booklets were bound together by the 1260s or shortly after, with the exception of the final unit of MS Douce 137.⁷⁵ A second list of titles written in the second half of the fourteenth century by a later owner (MS Douce 132, fol. 82v) offers further insights into the circulation of the booklets. It is understood to represent the items borrowed by friends, including one of the titles in the third booklet of MS Douce 137. This suggests that although the six units were assembled together, the discrete parts still circulated.⁷⁶ The list includes the names Lancelot and Partonopeu, which reveals that whoever owned the manuscripts by this point had amassed a varied collection of works, including some of the most famous heroes of French romance. The lists in MSS Douce 132 and 137 thus expose intriguing information on the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century circulation of booklets with French texts in England.

⁷³ William is believed to have been a student at Oxford during the 1260s, where he is likely to have acquired part of the manuscript's components. See Taylor, p. 121.

⁷⁴ For a detailed description of the contents see Robinson, pp. 56-57, 62-67.

⁷⁵ The four leaves at the beginning of MS Douce 137 (on which is written the list of contents) potentially represent the original parchment covers. See Robinson, pp. 62-63. The sixth booklet (MS Douce 137, fols 98-112) was produced in the thirteenth century, but not bound with the other units until the fourteenth, when it was added to the list the contents.

⁷⁶ Robinson, p. 57.

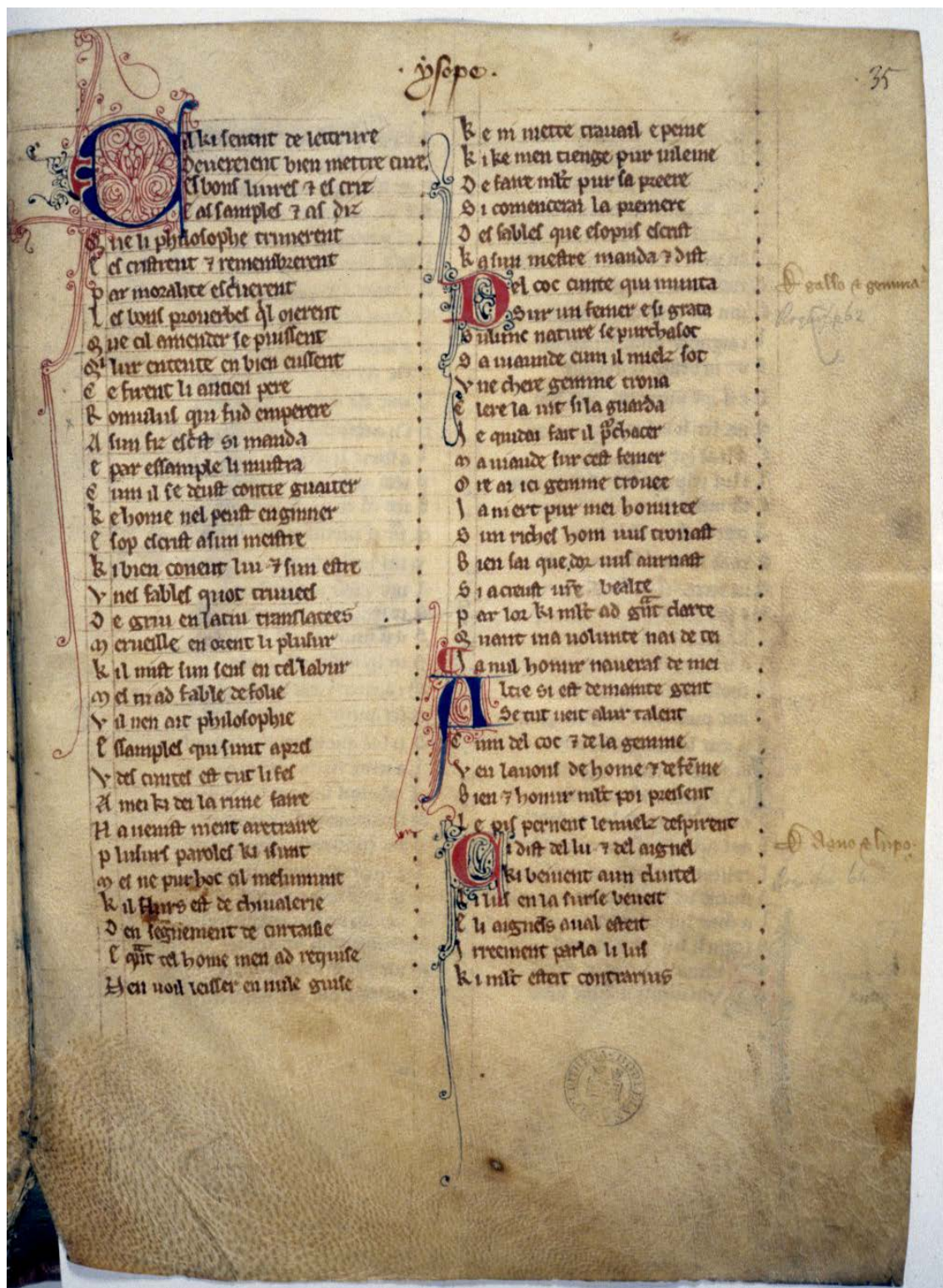


Figure III, 1: Oxford, Bodl., MS Douce 132, Ysopet (fol. 35r)

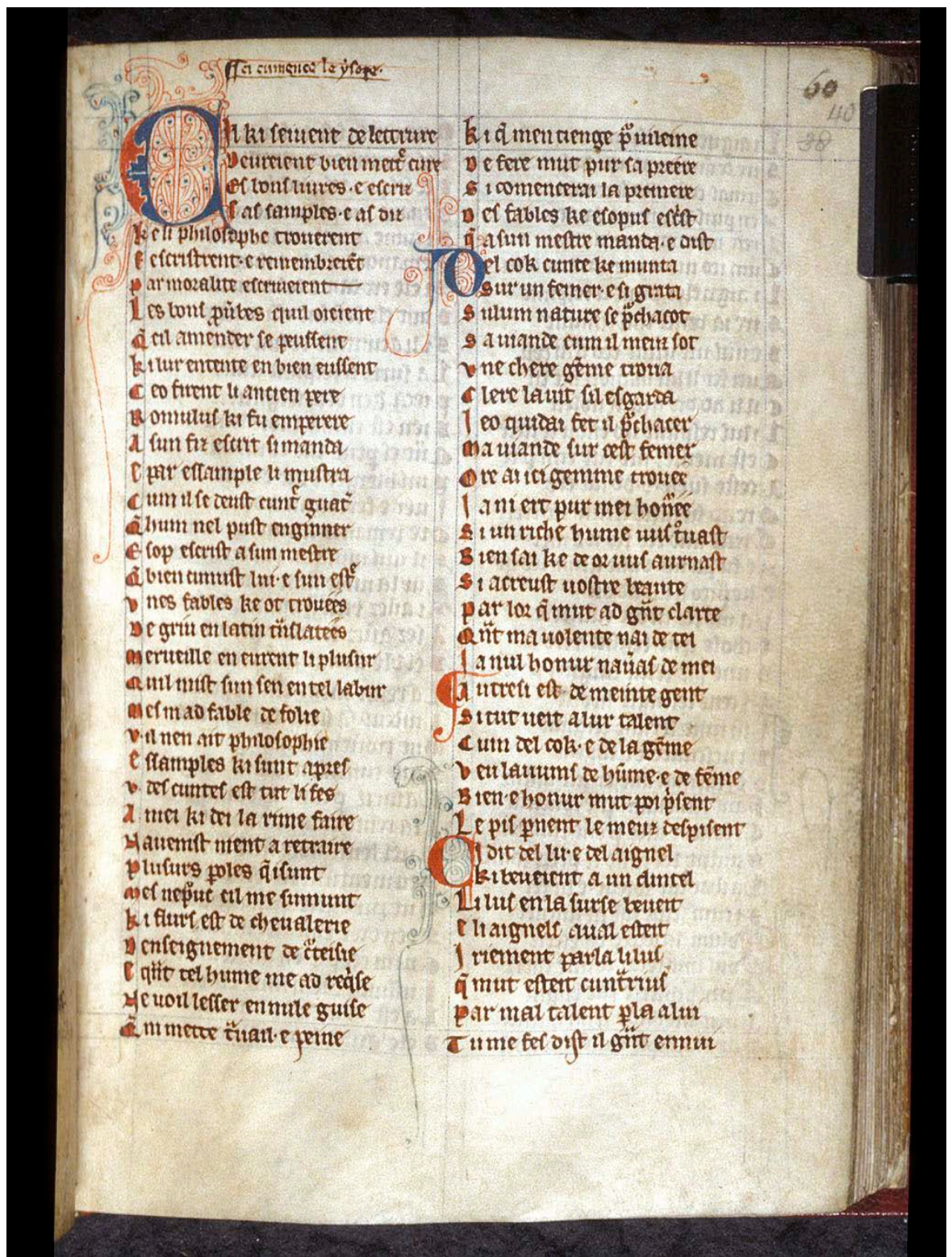


Figure III, 2: London, BL, MS Harley 978, *Ysopet* (fol. 40ra)

The booklet with the *Ysopet* (MS Douce 132, fols 1-62) and three booklets in MS Douce 137 manifest codicological characteristics typical of manuscripts produced in Oxford (see Appendix 3: Table 3.4).⁷⁷ Yet whilst their provenance is the same, their contents differ significantly, underlining the varied nature of the material being copied in the Oxford scriptoria. The booklets in MS Douce 137 primarily contain items relevant to the professional activities of the projected first owner.⁷⁸ By contrast, the booklet with the *Ysopet* (in MS Douce 132) is formed entirely of content in French. Produced as a unit, the items in this booklet could represent either a stock assembly of French works produced by the workshop, or perhaps, the bespoke order of their first owner. Indeed, the French items are distinguished from the other material in the list of contents (MS Douce 137, fol. 4v), indicating their distinct appeal and function for the reader.⁷⁹ The first item introduces the exemplary Christian hero of the twelfth-century *Roman de Horn* (MS Douce 132, fols 1r-22v), introduced with the only original title, which foregrounds the hero's prowess: 'Hic est de horn bono milite' (fol. 1r). This is followed by the religious doctrine and allegory of the thirteenth-century *Chasteau d'Amour* (MS Douce 132, fols 23ra-34va), and then concluded with the pragmatic moral teachings of the *Ysopet*.

All three works in the booklet with the *Ysopet* are associated with an author figure. In the case of *Horn*, the attribution to 'Mestre Thomas' appears in the third line and again at end. Whilst the original scribe does not attribute the authorship of the *Chasteau d'Amour*, it appears that the influential Oxford scholar and Bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grosseteste was recognised as author of the text. Indeed, the name 'Grosseteste' is added in the top margin of the first page of the *Chasteau* (fol. 23r)

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 57.

⁷⁸ The legal items include Latin texts on law and accountancy, sections from Walter of Henley's treatises on estate management, a legal treatise by Ranulph of Glanville (see Robinson).

⁷⁹ The illustrated *Bestiaire* by Guillaume le Clerc (Douce 132, fols 63ra-81vb), which fills the fifth booklet, features with these three French items in the list of contents.

after the copying of the booklet by a medieval reader, suggesting his status as a local figure of authority and the metonymic function of his name as identifier of the text. The same medieval hand writes 'ysope' (fol. 35r) in the top margin of the first page of the *Ysopet*, echoing the title given in the epilogue. Marie's authorship is only noted in the text in the same manner as the attribution in *Horn*. Likewise, in the list of contents, it simply states 'Ysopus' (MS Douce 137, fol. 4v). Thus, the attribution to Marie in the *Ysopet*'s epilogue elicits no particular response from the compiler and/or reader of this codex.

By contrast, in the context of MS Harley 978, the co-presence of two story collections attributed to Marie creates a narrative of her authorship. The copy of the *Ysopet* in MS Harley 978 is integrated to form part of a longer compilation of composite units that includes, most significantly to this study, the *Lais* attributed to Marie. This famous trilingual miscellany combines Latin, French and English items, ranging from musical pieces, a calendar and medical treatises to satirical Latin verse, Latin and Anglo-Norman texts on the life of Becket, and *The Song of Lewes*.⁸⁰ On the final folios after the *Lais*, we find a list of antiphons (fols 160v-161r) and the name of the suggested thirteenth-century owner and compiler of the manuscript, William of Winchester, 'Ord. li. W. de Wint.' (fol. 160v).⁸¹ Whilst the majority of the contents were copied in the 1260s in various Oxford workshops, Taylor argues that by the time the names were added to the final pages, MS Harley 978 represented a single, 'unified volume'.⁸²

⁸⁰ For a description of the contents, see also Tony Hunt, *Popular Medicine in Thirteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1990), pp. 101-04.

⁸¹ The list features a liturgical polyphony composed by fellow Reading monks who were active in the 1270s and 1280s. Other links to Reading Abbey include the calendar (fols 15v-21r), which has references to the deaths of two thirteenth-century abbots of Reading. See 'British Library Catalogue of Digitised Manuscripts' <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_978> [accessed 26 September 2014].

⁸² But he adds that 'several qualifications are necessary', pp. 88-89.

The two story collections attributed to Marie are of the same provenance, but do not appear in succession. Created by the same Oxford workshop, a single scribe copied all of the *Ysopet* (fols 40ra-67va) and the majority of the *Lais* (fols 118ra-160ra), apart from the first two folios of the latter (fols 118r-120r).⁸³ Indeed, the first quire of the *Lais* is the only one in which the text is copied in two columns of 32 lines. By contrast, 35 lines are ruled in all of the other quires of both story collections, and this exception is most likely attributable to the participation of the second scribe.⁸⁴ The *Ysopet* is copied across three 12-folio quires, and concludes on the fourth folio of the third quire (fol. 67v), leaving over half of the final quire blank.⁸⁵ The remaining part of this quire was filled with Latin poems attributed to Walter Map (fols 68v-74v) by a fourteenth-century scribe in a cursive book hand. Four further quires divide the *Ysopet* from the *Lais*, which is copied across the final four twelve-folio quires of the codex.⁸⁶ It is not clear why eight blank folios were left in the final quire of the *Ysopet*, nor why the same workshop did not copy the two collections continuously in a single booklet. Were the two discrete gatherings created in this manner because of the compiler's demands or the workshop's methods of production? Did the second scribe influence the original plan of the first? Whatever the case, the manuscript's thirteenth-century owner was clearly interested in the figure of Marie and her two story collections, which cover over a third of the manuscript's folios.

The compilation of the two story collections attributed to Marie in MS Harley 978 has incited a number of different readings. Taylor proposes the appealing

⁸³ In addition to using a thicker nib, the second scribe highlights the couplet.

⁸⁴ The ruling of the third quire (fols 22-33) in MS Harley 978, which primarily contains medical texts, also has thirty-two lines, the same quire structure (twelve folios), and very similar red and blue pen-flourished initials to those that decorate the two story collections, suggesting their shared provenance.

⁸⁵ I thank Julian Harrison and James Freeman at the British Library for verifying the collation of the codex.

⁸⁶ However, the last four folios of the final twelve-folio quire were removed.

idea that the ‘terms and arguments of *amour courtois*’ in the *Lais* were used in the seduction of William’s rumoured lover, Dame Agnes of Avenbury of Limebrook.⁸⁷ Whereas Taylor focuses on readership, others have regarded the compilation of MS Harley 978 in relation to the projected identifications of Marie de France. Rupert Pickens speculates that the mutilation before the *Ysopet* may have once included quires with the *Espurgatoire* and *La Vie de seinte Audree*, creating ‘Marie’s *Œuvres complètes*’.⁸⁸ The compilation of items by a single author is not a common phenomenon in English thirteenth-century vernacular manuscripts, especially in light of the few named authors and their mostly indeterminate corpora. Pickens’s hypothesis is thus counter-intuitive given the wider tradition. In addition to the circularity of this speculative proposition, he reads the texts in MS Harley 978 as corroborating the argument that ‘Marie de France’ was Marie de Meulan, daughter of Agnès de Montfort and Waleran de Beaumont, Count of Meulan and Earl of Worcester, and the wife of Hugh Talbot, Baron of Cleuille. However, Rossi demonstrates how this identification is based on the misreading of sources.⁸⁹ Instead, Rossi reads MS Harley 978 in relation to her argument that the female author was Marie Becket, highlighting the numerous items relating to her brother, Thomas Becket, especially in the four quires between the *Ysopet* and *Lais*.⁹⁰ Like Taylor, she sees significance in the arrangement of the compilation, but for Rossi its pertinence relates to her attempt to identify the enigmatic Marie.

Whilst Harley MS 978 brings together a highly suggestive range of material for the identification of the historical Marie, the current study will focus instead on reading ‘Marie’ as she is revealed in the *Ysopet* and the *Lais*. The presence of these

⁸⁷ Taylor, p. 136.

⁸⁸ Rupert Pickens, ‘Reading Harley 978: Marie de France in Context’, in *Courtly Arts and the Art of Courtliness: Selected Papers from the Eleventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 29 July-4 August 2004*, ed. by Keith Busby and Christopher Kleinhenz (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006), pp. 527-42, p. 534.

⁸⁹ Indeed, it is highly unlikely that a twelfth-century Marie de Meulan ever existed, pp. 81-98.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

two attributed story collections, their joint manufacture and arrangement in this codex create a narrative of authorship that runs counter to the usual readings of the *Ysopet* and the *Lais*. Left lurking in the shadows, the *Ysopet* tends to be viewed as either an anterior or secondary production.⁹¹ Yet, in MS Harley 978 the *Ysopet* comes first. In addition, the hierarchisation of initials in MS Harley 978 elevates the status of the *Ysopet* above the *Lais*. A large four-line-high red and blue puzzle initial introduces the prologue of the fable collection. By contrast, a three-line-high plain blue initial with red pen flourishes marks the beginning of the *Lais*. Their ordering could be compared to the compilation of the *FPA* and its unique sequel on love in Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 7517 (1.4.2): the pragmatic teachings of the fables are succeeded by the amorous concerns of the *Lais*. Despite the 50 folios between the two works, their shared authorship invites cross-comparison.

The prologue to the *Lais* both echoes and transcends the literary agenda and construction of authorship elucidated in the opening and closing passages of the fable collection. It progresses the narrative of self-conscious authorisation, marking the next step in the female author's literary career. In my reading of the prologue of the *Ysopet* in MS Harley 978, I argued that the author indirectly legitimises her participation in the tradition by emphasising her patron's request, whilst self-consciously underlining the potential scorn of her detractors. By the epilogue, she shifts from indirection to asserting herself, and is so proud of her completed work that she fears that others might want to plagiarise it. In the prologue of the *Lais*, she builds on these two passages, expressing the self-confidence of the epilogue at the same time as echoing the *Ysopet's* prologue. The latter is immediately recalled in the

⁹¹ Pickens and Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner are amongst the few scholars to approach the *Lais* from the perspective of the *Ysopet*. Pickens casts the *Ysopet* as 'une sorte de texte originaire', 'Marie de France et la culture de la cour anglo-normande: corrélations entre les *Lais* et les *Fables*', in 'Plaist vos oïr bone cançon vallant?' *Mélanges de langue et de littérature médiévales offerts à François Suard*, ed. by Dominique Boutet et al., 2 vols (Lille: Conseil scientifique de l'Université Charles-de-Gaulle-Lille III, 1999), vol. 2, pp. 713-722, p. 722; Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner, 'Speaking Through Animals in Marie de France's *Lais* and *Fables*' in *A Companion*, pp. 157-85.

first few lines, in which she highlights the responsibility of the erudite to share their knowledge:

Ki deus ad dune en science
e de parler bon eloquence
Ne sen deit taisir ne celer
ainz se deit uolunters mustrer (fol. 118ra [= Rychner ed., ll. 1-4])⁹²

In this instance, the gift of knowledge is divinely awarded: God decides on whom it is bestowed.⁹³ The narrator thus implicitly identifies herself as one of the chosen ones. In replacement of the noble patron of the *Ysopet*, the absolute authority of God summons her to action. This is the first of three reasons she identifies for undertaking the *Lais*, which all ‘pertain directly to the authorial subject’.⁹⁴ The second reason is the moral benefits and solace afforded to those who ‘greuos ouere comencier’ (fol. 118ra [= Rychner ed., l. 25]), and the third relates to her chosen sources. The request of her patron is the primary reason in the *Ysopet*, in this prologue it occurs as the fourth.

The choice and manner in which she legitimises the subject matter epitomise the authoritative stance of the female author in the prologue of the *Lais*. Instead of translating ‘aukune bone estoire’ (fol. 118ra [= Rychner ed., l. 29]) from Latin into the vernacular, an act she regards as of little value (‘Mais ne me fust guaires de pris’ (fol. 118ra [= Rychner ed., l. 31]), she chooses to recount the *lais* that she has *heard*. This contrasts with her participation in a chain of *translatio* from Latin to French in the *Ysopet*, and her alignment with the classical tradition of ‘li ancien pere’. Whilst moving away from this written tradition and its male *auctores*, she projects value onto the aural sources of the *lais* and her important role in ensuring their *remembrance*. In doing so, she sets her own agenda, foregrounding the singularity of her work and its

⁹² *Les Lais de Marie de France*, ed. by Jean Rychner (Paris: Champion, 1966).

⁹³ This invokes the parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14-30), see Whalen, ‘The Prologues and Epilogues’, p. 4.

⁹⁴ Kinoshita and McCracken, p. 20.

inherent worth. The ‘surplus’ she brings to ‘la lettre’ of the classical tradition is revolutionary. It is a challenge that can only be voiced from the position of an author who has already participated in the tradition and proven herself.

The author’s sense of authority is reinforced by the self-attribution in the prologue. Whilst modern editors include the naming passage at the beginning of *Guigemar* owing to its presence in fr. 2168, it features as part of the general prologue in MS Harley 978.⁹⁵ Following the address to her patron, it is marked by an enlarged letter ‘K’ in black ink. As with the epilogue of the *Ysopet*, her naming is associated with remembrance: ‘Oez seigneurs ke dit marie / ki en sun tens pas ne soblie’ (fol. 118vb [= Rychner ed., *Guigemar*, ll. 3-4]). The importance of looking after one’s reputation is placed within the context of the potential reproaches faced by the worthy in their attempts to do good (‘bien fait’):

Celui deiuent la gent loer
ki en bien fait de sei parler
Mais quant il i ad en un pais
humme u femme de grant pris
Ci ki de sun bien unt enuie
souent en dient uilenie
Sun pris li uolent abeisser (fol. 118rb-va [= Rychner ed., *Guigemar*, ll. 7-11])

This simultaneously aligns Marie and her act of composition with the ‘humme u femme de grant pris’, a community of both sexes, unlike ‘li ancien pere’. In an echo of the prologue to the *Ysopet* (‘ki *que* men tienge *pur* uileine’), the potential reproaches (‘uilenie’) are attributed to ‘enuie’. Thus, she cleverly establishes the moral upper hand over the criticisms of others. Moreover, the ‘gangleur v losengier’ (fol. 118va [= Rychner ed., *Guigemar*, l. 16]) are said to act according to their nature (‘ceo est lur dreit de mesparler’, fol. 118va [= Rychner ed., *Guigemar*, l. 18]). They thus behave indiscriminately no matter what is before them, in the same manner as the cock

⁹⁵ Two blank lines differentiate the end of the prologue for the collection from the start of *Guigemar*, which begins in the manuscript at line 27 of Rychner’s edition (‘En cel tens tint hoilas la tere’ (fol. 118va)).

scratching on the mound rejects the gem that he finds in the first tale of the *Ysopet*, *De gallo et gemma* (I).

Whether the entire prologue is authorial or not does not change the fact that in the context of MS Harley 978, the prologues and epilogue of the two story collections attributed to Marie cumulatively depict an author figure, who authorises her literary presence through her participation in and reconfiguration of the written tradition of her male predecessors. When compared with the other English manuscripts in which the *Ysopet* is copied in a booklet, MS Harley 978 represents a more meaningful act of post-production compilation, which continues to influence the way we read its contents.

3.2.3 Questions of Kingship in London, BL, MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV

The final and latest English manuscript of the *Ysopet* has a number of distinct characteristics which differentiate it from the other manuscripts in the insular corpus. Firstly, MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV is the only English codex in which the *Ysopet* is copied as part of a longer organic compilation rather than in a booklet. Secondly, the tall and narrow physical form of this manuscript (248 x 120 mm) distinguishes it from the rest of the corpus. This type of format is linked to education and the compiler may therefore have been a student, master, or monk affiliated with a university.⁹⁶ Thirdly, the content is united by its focus on recent history and kingship, and, in particular, the events surrounding the life of Thomas Becket in Latin and Anglo-Norman, which cover almost three quarters of the codex. The compilation of

⁹⁶ Erik Kwakkel, “‘These Books are Tall and not Wide Enough’: Anomalous Page Dimensions in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries”, paper presentation at ‘Book Design from the Middle Ages to the Future. Traditions and Evolutions’, University of Antwerp, 29-30 September, 2011 <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4V0PDf9z68c&list=PL5A6D4C45B2BF2F4D&index=3>> [accessed 26 September 2014].

five different Latin accounts of the life of Thomas Becket, known as the *Quadriologus II* (fols 33r-92r)⁹⁷ and the twelfth-century *Vie de Thomas Becket* (fols 95v-113r) by Beneit de Saint Albans feature in seven quires linked by a series of catchwords that form the second copying unit of the codex.⁹⁸ At the end of the latter, the original scribe transcribed a list of the archbishops of Canterbury and York, and bishops of Durham, including those English Church leaders who played a role in Becket's martyrdom. The final figure in the York list is John Romaine, who was active between 1285 and 1296, which makes it possible to date this codex to the end of the thirteenth century.⁹⁹ The *Quadriologus* is preceded by the *Ysopet* (fols 19ra-32rb), which features at the end of the first copying unit.

Rather than the famous martyr, the first item of the codex is the *lai Lanval* (fols 1r-8v), which makes this the only English manuscript (apart from MS Harley 978) to feature both the *Ysopet* and a *lai*.¹⁰⁰ Whilst Busby has suggested that Marie's authorship subtends the presence of the *lai* and the *Ysopet*, neither of the works is attributed in this codex.¹⁰¹ Indeed, as highlighted above, the copy of the *Ysopet* in MS

⁹⁷ A rubricated and numbered list of contents precedes each of its three books, enabling the reader to navigate its extensive content. The version of the *Quadriologus II* found in MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV includes the letter of dedication from E[lias] of Evesham to Abbot Henry of Crowland, and is believed to have been compiled between 1198 and 1199. See Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket: A Textual History of his Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980), pp. 205-06; Michael Staunton, *Thomas Becket and his Biographers* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 6-7; Thomas Duffus Hardy, *Descriptive Catalogue of Materials Relating to the History of Great Britain and Ireland, to the end of the Reign of Henry VII*, 2 vols, (London: Longman & Co., 1865), vol. 2, pp. 342-44.

⁹⁸ *La Vie de Thomas Becket par Beneit, poème anglo-normand du XIIe siècle publié d'après tous les manuscrits*, ed. by Börje Schlyter (Lund: Gleerup, 1941). The lack of wear and tear suggests that the second copying unit was bound in this position from the point of manufacture, despite the elaborately decorated first page of the *Quadriologus*.

⁹⁹ Ward, *Catalogue*, vol. 1, p. 31; cf. Baum, p. 57. The last of the Archbishops of Canterbury is 'Stephanus', Cardinal Stephen Langton, who held the role between 1207 and 1228. In the list of Bishops of Durham, the final names listed are Philip of Poitou (1197-1208) and Richard Poore (1209-1213).

¹⁰⁰ The only other manuscript to include both *lais* attributed to Marie and the *Ysopet* is the continental multi-text codex, fr. 2168, which contains *Lanval*, *Guigemar* and *Yonec*. However, the female author is absent from the copy of the *Ysopet*, which features neither the epilogue nor the feminine lines in the prologue.

¹⁰¹ In *Codex and Context*, Busby describes the manuscripts with the *Ysopet* and *lais* as the 'tentative beginnings of author collections' (p. 212, note 110; see also, pp. 472-84). However, in his recent chapter in *A Companion*, the possibility is expressed more tentatively: 'It is possible that the presence in the same manuscript of a *lai* and Marie's *Fables* reflects a lingering recognition of Marie as author of

MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV is closer to the shorter version without the epilogue (and attribution of authorship) found in the Cambridge booklet. Moreover, the *Ysopet* and *Lanval* are divided by *Li Livrere des reis de Brittanie* (fols 8v-18r), an abridged version of a thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman prose chronicle that spans from Egbert to the death of Richard I,¹⁰² and a short twelfth-century Latin verse poem on the fall of Troy (fols 18r-18v), *Pergama flere volo*.¹⁰³ The latter lacks the final line found in other copies: ‘femina fatalis, femina feta malis’. However, the two mutilated folios (originally bound between folios 18 and 19) are likely to have contained this line, the first thirty-two lines of the *Ysopet*’s prologue and possibly another short item.¹⁰⁴ The folios that divide the two works, the absence of the attribution of authorship and the evident global themes underlying the compilation of the codex encourage a reading of *Lanval* and the *Ysopet* in relation to their content rather than the attribution of authorship suggested by MS Harley 978.

Lanval and the *Ysopet* both comment on the themes of lordship, loyalty, and treachery, central to the history of Becket and the kings of England. Within the context of MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV, the themes of betrayal and reward connect *Lanval* to the historical events surrounding the dispute between Henry II and Becket. Indeed, King Arthur and Guinevere in this *lai* have been interpreted as avatars of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine.¹⁰⁵ Read as a mirror for princes, there is much within the *Ysopet* that questions the role and application of seigniorial authority, as

both genres, clearer in Harley 978, but in the absence of the epilogue to the *Fables* this must remain speculation’. ‘Manuscripts’, p. 315.

¹⁰² This copy does not include the prologue. See Ruth J. Dean and Maureen B. M. Boulton, *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts* (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999), no. 13, pp. 12-15.

¹⁰³ For a transcription of the copy of the poem in Douai, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 880, see Jacob Hammer, ‘Some Leonine Summaries of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Other Poems’, *Speculum*, 6.1 (1931): 121-22.

¹⁰⁴ Based on the average number of 42 lines ruled on the other folios, there would have been a total 168 lines on the two missing folios. There would have been approximately 151 lines remaining, as, in addition to the final line of the Latin poem, the *Ysopet*’s prologue would have covered 16 lines, for 2 lines of verse are fitted into 1 line of the column.

¹⁰⁵ See Rossi, pp. 50-53.

well as the interdependency of the different members of society, epitomised in the fable, *De ventre et membris* (XXVII).¹⁰⁶ Through the metaphor of the body politic, the fable illustrates how the misbehaviour of any faction of society is harmful to all. A two-line-high red initial introduces each fable in this copy and the epimythium is marked by a red *pied de mouche*. However, in three fables, the morals are highlighted by blue *pieds de mouche*.¹⁰⁷ One of these fables, *De rustico et monedula eius* (LVI) (fol. 30v), concerns a *vilain* and his murdered chough, the bird on the coat of arms of Becket.¹⁰⁸ The neighbour who kills the bird in the fable bribes the judge, who eventually lets him off. The moral states:

Pur co ne deit prince ne reis
 ses comandement ne les leis
 Al couertus mettre en baillie
 Kar sa dreiture en est perie (fol. 30v)

The murdered chough, the questions of judicial legitimacy, and the moral on kingship all bear significance to the martyrdom of the canonised Archbishop. The accent placed on this fable by the blue *pied de mouche* thus has heightened reverberations in the context of this manuscript compilation.

A distinct interest in the martyrdom of Becket is even visually expressed in the margins of *Li Livrere des reis de Brittanie*, a text obsessed with defining ‘good’ and ‘bad’ kings. The only marginal drawing in the codex occurs at the bottom of folio 15v, below the section that recounts the death of Becket during the reign of Henry II:

¹⁰⁶ On the different forms of education in the *Ysopet* and influence of John of Salisbury’s *Policraticus*, see Karen K. Jambeck, ‘The Fables of Marie de France: A Mirror of Princes’, in *In Quest of Marie de France, a Twelfth-Century Poet*, ed. by Chantal A. Maréchal (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), pp. 59-106.

¹⁰⁷ The three fables are *De formica et cicada* (XXXIX), *De rustico et monedula eius* (LVI) and *De lupo et scarabaeo* (LXV).

¹⁰⁸ Becket’s coat of arms has three choughs; ‘bequet’ designated chough in Old French, which Rossi highlights in her reading of MS Harley 978 in support of the hypothesis that the female author was Marie Becket, the martyr’s sister, p. 196.

Et en sun tens le disutime an de sun regne fu seint Thomas martaize . pur coe
kil ne volt granter noueles custumes en cuntre la dreiture. e la fraunchise de
seint eglise. Il marrut deuant la gule de ault. (fol. 15v)

Below the text in the bottom margin, the reader (-compiler?) depicts a smiling crowned figure. On his left, a hand sways a thurible, and on the right, another hand makes a blessing gesture.¹⁰⁹ This image of what appears to be the coronation of Henry II brings our attention once more to the life of this influential monarch and his fateful interactions with the English Church.

Read in the global context of MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV, the unattributed copies of *Lanval* and the *Ysopet* acquire a role and function that goes beyond claims of shared authorship. Their pertinence resides more in the way they comment on and contribute to the subject that permeates and animates the codex: the martyrdom of Thomas Becket at the hands of Henry II.

The insular manuscripts of the *Ysopet* form a corpus characterised by idiosyncrasies. They bear witness to the importance of booklet production in thirteenth-century England, and the concomitant textual mobility of this form of dissemination. Indeed, the greater degree of *mouvance* in these early copies is a symptom of their portability. In contrast to previous scholarship, which predominantly interprets the corpus from the lens of ‘Marie de France’ and the construction of her authorship in MS Harley 978, the manuscripts have been read according to the extant author attributions (both within the text and paratext) and the interplay of the *Ysopet* with its co-texts. Whilst the feminine voice of the narrator-translator is present in all of the codices and could be seen to distinguish the first vernacular fable collection, ‘Marie’ in most cases is absent. Her name only appears in the two copies that emerged from Oxford, and it is this form of the fable collection that reaches the Continent. In the hands of the professional and sophisticated

¹⁰⁹ Both hands descend from sleeves adorned with an animal’s head; the mouth of the one of the right omits a decorative flame-like flourish.

continental book manufacturers, combined with the emerging importance of authorship for the transmission of vernacular literature, the *Ysopet*'s unique female author begins to play a more prominent role.

3.3 Portraits of the Author: Marie on the Continent

The twenty continental manuscripts of the *Ysopet* represent a varied and colourful corpus, primarily produced in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In this important period for the compilation of multi-text codices, the figure of Marie plays a central role in the dissemination of the *Ysopet*. Only three of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century continental copies lack the epilogue, which underlines the important presence of the female author in this period.¹¹⁰ At the same time, collections of short verse narratives attributed to a single author begin to occur within large manuscript compilations, such as the collected works attributed to Rutebeuf within the exceptionally diverse Paris, BnF, f. fr. 837, and the group of *dits* by Baudouin de Condé in Paris, Ars., MS 3142.¹¹¹ The latter is one of the four extant codices to include portraits of Marie. The epilogue is found in each of these manuscripts with the exception of the fragmentary Vatican manuscript.¹¹² Authorship plays a particularly prominent role in this manuscript, and we find our female author presented with the same authority as her male *confrères*. By contrast, in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173, Aesop rather than Marie fronts the *Ysopet*, and the female author is demoted to the epilogue, where she names herself. The construction and recognition of authorship is especially significant in the illustrated manuscripts. By examining the

¹¹⁰ I have not included Paris, BnF, f. fr. 25545 in this figure because the end of the *Ysopet* is mutilated and therefore it is not possible to assert whether the epilogue was present or not.

¹¹¹ On the role of authorship in these two manuscripts, see Besamusca et al., 'Author Attributions'.

¹¹² The Vatican manuscript includes only the first quire of the *Ysopet*, produced at the end of the fourteenth century/beginning of the fifteenth. One of the five manuscripts, Cologne, Fondation Martin Bodmer, MS 113, is a fifteenth-century copy of Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173 and will be discussed below (see 3.4.1).

portraits in their broader codicological context, it is possible to illustrate their relationship to the manuscript's construction of authorship, and the influences underlying the compilation of the codex. What is at stake for the reception of Marie and her fable collection? What do the images reveal about medieval attitudes to authorship?

3.3.1 Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173: An Antifeminist *Remaniement* of Marie and the *Ysopet*

Within the corpus, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173 is unusual both for its author portraits and for the augmentation and extension of the *Ysopet* with a number of *fabliaux*. It is the only copy that is introduced by a portrait of Aesop rather than Marie. The female author only appears before the epilogue. In terms of the extension, two independent narratives are integrated into the *Ysopet* and four additional *fabliaux* as well as a short antifeminist piece appear after the epilogue. With the exception of the final *fabliau*, all of these items are copied by the same scribe and together form the second part of the manuscript. A number of contemporary codices also compile the *Ysopet* with *fabliaux*, *inter alia* Paris, BnF, f. fr. 12603 and fr. 14971.¹¹³ However, fr. 2173 is the only manuscript in which independently circulating *fabliaux* are inserted *into* the fable collection and the paratextual presentation does not differentiate the *Ysopet* from the extrinsic items. Each item is preceded by an illustration and a two-line-high pen-flourished initial, and another two-line-high pen-flourished initial highlights the

¹¹³ In Paris, BnF, f. fr. 12603, the *Ysopet* is preceded and followed by two *fabliaux*: *La Male Honte I* (NRCF, vol. V, no. 43, pp. 83-134) and *La Feme qui cunquie son Baron* (NRCF, vol. IX, no. 104, pp. 125-33). In fr. 14971, the *Ysopet* is followed by *Lai de l'ombre* attributed to Jean Renart and the *fabliau Le Sacristan II* (NRCF, vol. VII, no. 74, pp. 1-189). They are presented with the same style of decoration as the fables, but are not included in the table of contents, encouraging their interplay whilst distinguishing them from the *Ysopet*'s contents. Significantly, in both these manuscripts the *Ysopet* is found with extraneous fables, see Appendix 3: Table 3.2.

moral.¹¹⁴ What are the implications of this extension on the reading experience of the *Ysopet* and how does it relate to the presentation of authorship?

The extended *Ysopet* occurs in the second part of this multi-text codex, after one of the fable collection's most frequent co-texts and one of the most widely disseminated works of the medieval period: Gossuin de Metz's *Image du monde* (fols 1r-56v).¹¹⁵ These two popular works share the image of the pearl or gem of wisdom, exploited at the start of Gossuin's text and in the first fable of the *Ysopet*, *De gallo et gemma* (I). However, the two parts of the manuscripts do not appear to have been made in a single process. The quire numbering indicates that the *Image* and *Ysopet* were copied in separate gatherings (the second and third quires of the *Ysopet* unit are numbered 'i.i.' (fol. 77v) and 'i.i.i.' (fol. 87v) respectively).¹¹⁶ Furthermore, the programme of illustrations in the two units is distinct. Yet, as will be demonstrated, the illustration that introduces the *Image* appears to have inspired the work of the second artist.

After the solemn epilogue of the encyclopaedic *Image*, the *Ysopet* begins with the prologue's emphasis on the importance of the dissemination of knowledge and a framed historiated initial depicting a male scholar writing at a desk (fol. 58r). This portrait of Aesop, pictured within the letter 'C', recalls the first page of the *Image*. God is presented as the Creator, pictured with the world in another historiated initial 'C' (see figs IV, 1-2).¹¹⁷ The images have striking parallels, both 'authors' being pictured before their creations. In each case, the role of the contemporary author (Gossuin/Marie) is secondary to that of the perceived original creator.

¹¹⁴ There are remnants of scratched out rubrics before the first fable (fol. 58rb) and again before the fourth, fifth and sixth (fols 59rb, 59va, and 59vb).

¹¹⁵ They are also found together in Brussels, BR, MS 10296-304; London, BL, MS Harley 4333; Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1822, fr. 2168, and fr. 24428.

¹¹⁶ However, the final *fabliau*, *La Vieille qui oint la Palme au Chevalier* (NRCE, vol. VI, no. 72, pp. 289-99), is copied by a distinct thirteenth-century scribe. The two units of the codex are divided by a blank folio and fragment of Latin prose.

¹¹⁷ The first lines of the *Image* introduce the table of contents: 'Cist liures de clergie en roumanz / quest apelez ymage dou monde' (fol. 1ra).



Figure IV, 1:
Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173, *Image du monde*,
preceded by image of God as Creator
(fol. 1ra)



Figure IV, 2:
Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173, *Ysopet*, preceded
by portrait of Aesop (fol. 58r)

However, the frame and letter of the historiated initial at the start of the *Image* are more delicately adorned than in the illustration that precedes the *Ysopet*. Indeed, the style of the first historiated initial has been described as ‘gothique septentrional’, whilst the illustrations in the second part of the codex are believed to be Italian.¹¹⁸ They appear to have been added after the copying of the two units and after the addition of the pen-flourished initials, which are French in style. The style of the second artist has been linked to the decoration of the *Proverbia que dicuntur super natura feminarum* in the thirteenth-century Italian codex, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek und Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS Hamilton 390. This antifeminist reworking of the twelfth-century *Chastiemusart* is copied in the Venetian dialect, which led to the conclusion that the artist of the *Ysopet* in fr. 2173 was Italian.¹¹⁹ The distinctive frameless miniatures that precede the subsequent fables frequently extend into the marginal space. They reflect a more ‘naturalist’ style than the other illustrated copies of the *Ysopet*, owing to the extensive level of detail. This is exemplified in the

¹¹⁸ François Avril and Marie-Thérèse Gousset, *Manuscrits enluminés de la Bibliothèque nationale de France: Manuscrits d'origine italienne*, 2 vols (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1984), vol. 2, pp. 9-10. For a more detailed exploration of their affinities (and differences), see Maria Luisa Meneghetti, Sandro Bertelli and Roberto Tagliani, ‘Nuove acquisizioni per la potostoria del codice Hamilton 390 (già Saibante)’, *Critica del testo*, 15.1 (2012): 75-126, pp. 80-81.

¹¹⁹ See Avril and Gousset.

depiction of the teats on the female wolf (fol. 60ra), the human genitalia in the images that introduce the two inserted *fabliaux* (fols 78va and 92ra), as well as the careful distinctions between different breeds of bird (fol. 80rb). Thus, the Italian artist takes a freestyle approach to illuminating the fables, most likely in the absence of an exemplar. By contrast, his author portrait of Aesop imitates his French predecessor's work, foregrounding the male *auctor* and his reign over the fable tradition.

At the same time as comparing the portrait of Aesop with the one that precedes the *Image*, it is also pertinent to examine the antifeminist content in the *Ysopet* in relation to the presentation of authorship. As a reader, the Italian artist's response to the material shapes the future reception of the narratives (and their morals). The images on the folios surrounding the first inserted *fabliau*, version II of *Celui qui bota la pierre* (fols 78va-79rb), are particularly pertinent in this respect.¹²⁰ This *fabliau* is found between two fables about troublesome wives, *De uxore mala et marito eius* (XCV, fol. 78ra-rb) and *De homine et uxore litigiosa* (XCIV, fol. 79rb-vb). In the other copies, these two fables are located towards the end of the collection (see Appendix 3: Table 3.2), which suggests they may have been deliberately arranged with *Celui* for the purpose of this *remaniement*. By increasing the series to three, the *remanieur* foregrounds the feminine transgressions. Moreover, the interchangeability of these women and their wrongdoing is emphasised in the accompanying illustrations.

Women in the *Ysopet* generally tend to be presented in a more positive light than in the Latin fable tradition. Karen Jambeck identifies 'correctives to misogyny' that neutralise the negative examples of female bad behaviour and generalise the

¹²⁰ NRCF, vol. VI, no. 63, pp. 125-44.

morals.¹²¹ In *De homine et uxore litigiosa* (XCIV), rather than specify a woman, the moral refers to the behaviour of a generic ‘fool’, who remains stubborn even when he or she is knowingly at fault. However, the narrative does not bear a straightforward relationship to this teaching.¹²² Although the wife audaciously refuses to retract her opinion, she has the final word and makes her husband’s attempt to silence her appear foolish (see below). In the case of *De uxore mala et marito eius* (XCV) Jambeck argues that the *Ysopet*’s redaction focuses on the perversity of a single woman rather than ‘womankind’, and the moral is addressed to ‘all who oppose authority’.¹²³ Yet, the term ‘seignor’ in the epimythium is ambiguous, denoting feudal lord as well as husband.¹²⁴ Whilst the ‘correctives’ shift the emphases of the narratives and their morals, this does not prevent scribes, compilers and artists from restoring the misogyny.¹²⁵

The work of the artist accentuates the semantic echoes incited by the juxtaposition of *Celui qui bota la pierre* and *De homine et uxore litigiosa* (XCIV) across folios 78v and 79r (see figs V, 1-2). The illustration that precedes the *fabliau* graphically represents a couple in an embrace on one side and a child sitting by a fire on the other. This is the essential content of the narrative: a woman invites the advances of a priest, and sleeps with him in her home, whilst her child sits by the hearth. The moral to *Celui* is followed immediately by the illustration of *De homine et*

¹²¹ She bases this reading on the ‘*alpha*’ manuscripts as identified by Warnke. See Karen K. Jambeck, ‘Reclaiming the Woman in the Book: Marie de France and the *Fables*’, in *Women, the Book, and the Wordly*, ed. by Lesley Smith and Jane H. M. Taylor (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1995), pp. 119-37.

¹²² Amer reads the moral as ambiguous and the fable as reflecting on the female voice’s challenge to masculine authority, p. 197.

¹²³ Jambeck, ‘Reclaiming the Woman’, p. 131.

¹²⁴ This is picked up on by the *remanieur* of the *Ysopet* in Ars., MS 3142 (see below). Jambeck, ‘Reclaiming the Woman’, p. 132.

¹²⁵ Indeed, in the dyad on two cheating wives, *De muliere et proco eius* (XLIV) and *Iterum de muliere et proco eius* (XLV), the ‘correctives to misogyny’ are more easily reversed. Both of these fables associate women with *engin*, recalling the series from the *Disciplina clericalis*. The moral of *Iterum de muliere et proco eius* (XLV) is made to refer specifically to the cunning nature of women in four copies (and Warnke’s edition despite the generic terms of MS Harley 978). See Jambeck, ‘Reclaiming the Woman’, pp. 132-34.

uxore litigiosa (XCIV) (fol. 79rb), which depicts a man grabbing his wife's blonde hair and beating her.



Figure V, 1:
Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173, *Celui qui bota la pierre* (fol. f. 78va)

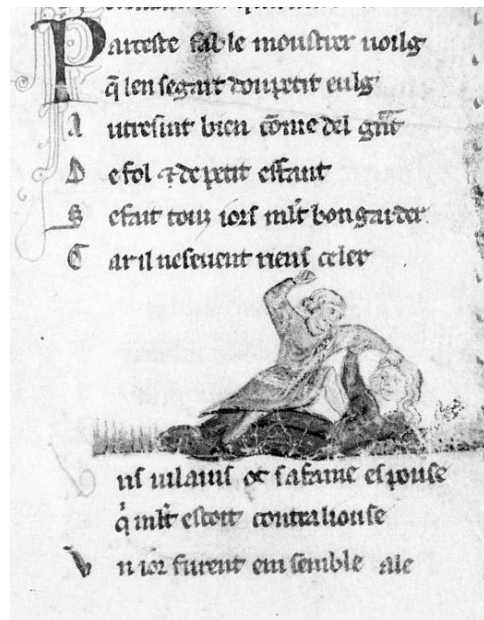


Figure V, 2:
Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173, *De homine et uxore litigiosa* (XCIV) (fol. 79rb)

The scene portrayed before *De homine et uxore litigiosa* (XCIV) matches the content in the last section of *Celui qui bota la pierre*, in which the son reveals his mother's affair by warning his father against throwing out the stone ('Pere laissez la pierre toute / Que nostres prestres ne uos foute / Ausint com il fouti ma'mere', ll. 89-91). The narrator then explicitly states that the husband grabs his wife by the hair: 'Sa feme prist par les cheueus / Si la rue a terre et traine / Le pié li met sor la poitrine' (ll. 98-100). In *De homine et uxore litigiosa* (XCIV), the husband chops out his wife's tongue when she disagrees with him, but the grabbing of her hair is not specifically alluded to. The grass pictured beneath her body reflects the field in which the story is set, but the act of violence bears more resemblance to the preceding tale. Moreover, the violence depicted contrasts with the other illustrations of *De homine et uxore litigiosa* (XCIV), such as the one in Ars., MS 3142, which foregrounds their verbal exchange

(fol. 271vb). The image in fr. 2173 thus acts as a conclusion to the sexual encounter of the wife and the priest in *Celui qui bota la pierre* and demonstrates the physical threat of not following the teaching of its tongue-in-cheek moral. Articulated in an echo of the language used in the fables ('Par'ceste fable moustrer uoilg' (l. 109)), it offers a warning about protecting oneself from the 'eyes' of those who do not know how to keep secrets.

The second integrated *fabliau*, *La Coille noire* (fols 92ra-93ra), appears before the final fable, in the build-up to the portrait of the female author (see fig. VI, 1).¹²⁶

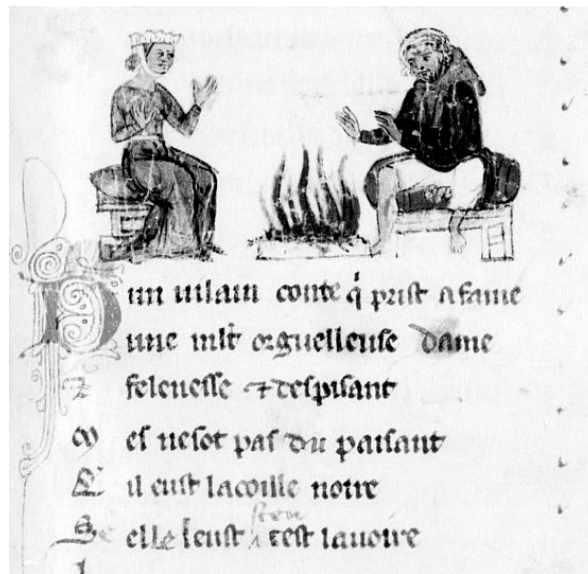


Figure VI, 1: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173, *La Coille noire* (fol. 92ra)

Again the visual integration of the inserted tale is seamless. In this narrative, a proud and wicked wife wants a divorce when she discovers that her husband's genitalia are black. In the moral, which is introduced with the typical formula ('Par cest fable pouez sauoir', *NRCF*, l. 115), the teaching criticises the wife for despising her husband for the colour of his genitalia, because whether white or black, they are just as effective. The rude and comic tone of this bawdy tale confronts the final fable, *De*

¹²⁶ *NRCF*, vol. V, no. 46, pp. 163-89.

femina et gallina (CII), and the epilogue, in which Marie names herself. In *De femina et gallina* (CII), the woman offers to feed the hen, but the bird refuses and continues to scratch. The moral underlines that the covetous behave according to their ‘nature’, even when they acquire wealth. On folio 93r, the illustrations portray the women as mirror images of each other: Marie’s posture and headwear is almost an exact reflection of the woman feeding the hen (see fig. VI, 2).

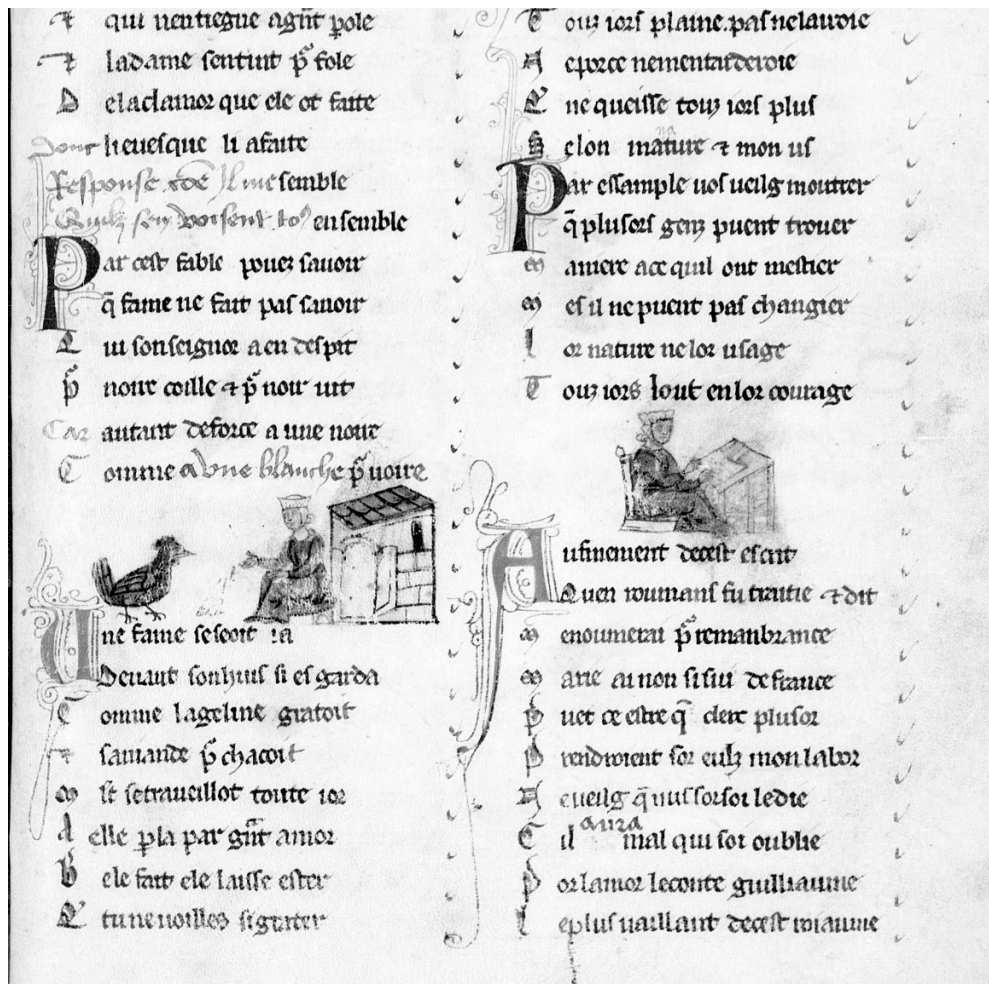


Figure VI, 2: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 2173, *De femina et gallina* (CII) and the *Ysopet's* epilogue with portrait of Marie (fol. 93r)

Sandra Hindman views the visual resemblance as underlining the correspondence between Marie offering morals to her readers and the woman offering food to the

hen.¹²⁷ Furthermore, she argues that together the portraits of Aesop and Marie reinforce the idea of a feminine *translatio studii*, highlighting the parallel between the cock in the first fable and the hen in the final one. Hindman characterises the portrait of the female author as ‘unforgettable’ and describes Marie as having ‘the last word’.¹²⁸ Yet, this reading is far from convincing. Rather than a glorified portrait, the image of Marie is one of the smallest illustrations in the codex, measuring only four lines high. Moreover, it is indistinguishable from the images that precede the fables and other items. As Busby rightly suggests, ‘the location of the image of Marie quite literally marginalizes her role without effacing it altogether.’¹²⁹ Marie is depicted as a woman in the act of study, but her portrait is undifferentiated from the women in the narratives: she wears a plain white barbette and fillet on her head, as do the woman with the hen and the troublesome wife of *La Coille noire* on the preceding folio (92ra). By contrast, the capped Aesop is presented as authoritative and clerkly. Rather than upholding Marie’s call for ‘remembrance’ in the epilogue, the artist creates an unmemorable depiction of the female author, which sees her voice fade.

The authority of the female voice is further undermined in the antifeminist items that follow the epilogue, which are not differentiated from the framework of the *Ysopet*. These items include the unicum, the *Dit de la femme* (fols 94vb-95rb), which outlines the different forms and attributes of this ‘beste’: when ‘maigre est et fameilleuse’, she is ‘pesible’ and ‘de grant simplece’, but when she is fat (‘en sa graisse’), she is proud and hard to please. The association of moral features with physical ones is consolidated by the artist: the illustration pictures a more substantial woman sitting and gesticulating, whilst a pious and slimmer lady stands by. The

¹²⁷ Sandra Hindman, ‘Æsop’s Cock and Marie’s Hen: Gendered Authorship in Text and Image in Manuscripts of Marie de France’s *Fables*’ in *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*, ed. by Lesley Janette Smith and Jane H. M. Taylor (London: British Library, 1996), pp. 45-56.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 48.

¹²⁹ Busby, ‘The Manuscripts’, p. 313.

subsequent items are two *fabliaux*, which proffer further negative examples of feminine transgressions: *Cele qui se fist foutre sur la fosse de son mari* (fols 95rb-96rb)¹³⁰ and *Le Prestre crucefié* (fols 96rb-97ra).¹³¹ The former is a retelling of the legend of the Widow of Ephesus, in which a recent widow gives away her husband's body for a new lover. A version also occurs within the *Ysopet*, *De vidua* (XXV, fol. 69ra). As well as lessening the reprehensibility of the widow, the *Ysopet*'s moral focuses on the little faith the dead can have in the living in general terms.¹³² By contrast, the version placed almost at end of the codex develops the misogyny and concludes with an unambiguous denigration of 'women':

Dame est de *mont* foible nature
 De'noient rit de'noient pleure
 Fame aime *et* het en petit d'eure
 Tost li'est talens remuez
 Qui fame croit il est desuez (ll. 113-17)

The fickleness of women is reiterated in the next item, *Le Prestre crucefié*, in which a tailor's wife is having an affair with a priest. However, in this narrative the husband enacts his revenge, and castrates his wife's lover.

The appropriation and extension of the framework of the *Ysopet* in fr. 2173 can be compared to the compilation of the *Vie des Pères* in Ars., MS 3527 (2.3.1) or the *FPA* in Pavia, MS Aldini 219 (1.3.2). In the case of fr. 2173, the act of augmentation shifts the ethos of the fable collection. Whilst a handful of fables in the *Ysopet* recount scenarios similar to the *fabliaux* found in fr. 2173, the fable collection does not share the hallmark of misogyny that characterises the additional items. However, even without changing the morals of these fables, the choice of additional texts affects the status of women in the *Ysopet* and in particular the (projected) female author. Furthermore, the programme of illustrations adds another layer of

¹³⁰ *NRCE*, vol. III, no. 20, pp. 375-403.

¹³¹ *NRCE*, vol. IV, no. 27, pp. 91-106.

¹³² See Jambeck, pp. 125-27; and Amer, pp. 176-77.

misogynistic appropriation. This is crystallised in the illustration before *De homine et uxore litigiosa* (XCIV, fol. 79rb). The ambiguous relationship between the narrative and the moral in this fable is overshadowed by the violent suppression of the woman's voice when she challenges masculine authority. In the context of fr. 2173, the fears of appropriation and oblivion expressed in the *Ysopet*'s epilogue are more than justified.

In addition to fr. 2173, it is possible that a male author would have been portrayed at the head of another late thirteenth-/early fourteenth-century codex. The blank space left for a miniature at the beginning of the *Ysopet* in fr. 25406 is unlikely to have depicted Marie. This manuscript contains one of the copies that remove the female author from the *Ysopet*. The two couplets which reveal the feminine voice are omitted along with the epilogue. In the context of fr. 25406, the *Ysopet* continues the masculine voice of its only co-text, the *Bestiaire* of Guillaume le Clerc (fols 1ra-30va).

3.3.2 The Different Faces of Marie

Whilst Marie's authorship of the *Ysopet* is never featured in the rubrics or explicits, in the three manuscripts with author portraits the female author is depicted at the head of the fable collection. The role assigned to Marie through the illustration nuances the relationship of the female author to the fable collection and to her audience. The content of these three manuscripts varies as much as the construction of authorship. In each case, I will demonstrate how the portrait relates to the wider dynamics of compilation.

In Paris, Ars., MS 3142, the two author portraits that accompany the *Ysopet* (fols 256ra-73ra) *both* portray the female author.¹³³ Within this luxuriously illuminated manuscript, authorship plays a significant role in the organisation of its literary, didactic and devotional content. It contains an exceptional proportion of attributed texts and includes some of the most established author figures of the thirteenth century, including the complete works of Adenet le Roi, who is believed to have potentially supervised its production.¹³⁴ Waguih Azzam and Olivier Collet identify in this codex ‘l’émergence d’une conscience et d’une perception nouvelles de la figure de l’auteur’, expressed through ‘une triple logique de représentation, structurale, narrative et picturale’.¹³⁵ Besides the prominent interest in authorship, the manuscript’s intended first owner is seen to have influenced the compilation and decoration of the codex. This high-end production has been linked to Marie de Brabant, crowned Queen consort of France in 1275. Marie’s *Ysopet* mediates between these two principles, as author of the fable collection and as namesake of the esteemed patron.¹³⁶

Marie is not the only author pictured in this codex. The authors of the longer works are all represented at least once in the programme of illustrations, in either a miniature or a historiated initial. In these individualised portraits, the ‘author’ takes the form of court poet, cleric and monastic writer, to name but a few. Whereas some figures are pictured producing their texts, others are presented performing or reading

¹³³ This late thirteenth-century codex is likely to have been made in Paris, but has clear connections with northeastern France and the Low Countries. See Waguih Azzam and Olivier Collet, ‘Le Manuscrit 3142 de la Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal. Mise en recueil et conscience littéraire au XIII^e siècle’, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 175 (2001): 207–45.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 219. Similarly, Huot writes: ‘A collection like MS 3142 suggests a different view of vernacular texts as self-contained units, crafted in a certain way by a poet operating under certain circumstances; they bear a historicity as texts, referring not only to the fictional or moral world that they describe but also to an original and unique act of composition.’ *From Song to Book*, p.45.

¹³⁶ See Azzam and Collet, pp. 226–29.

out their finished work.¹³⁷ The two portraits of Marie recount the narrative of her authorship and reflect the content in the prologue and epilogue. In the miniature before the prologue, she is presented in the act of writing (fig. VII, I).

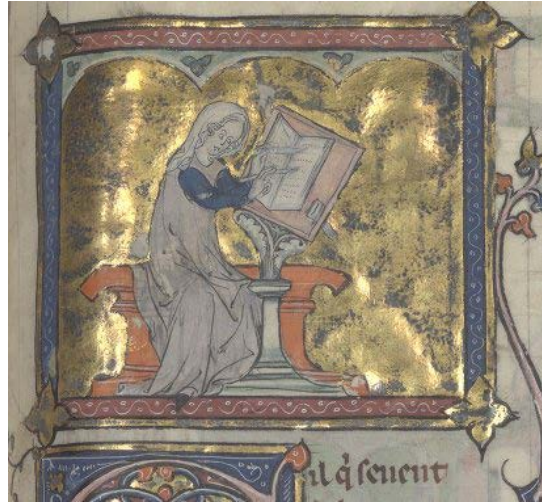


Figure VII, 1: Paris, Ars., MS 3142, Marie pictured at the start of the *Ysopet* (fol. 256ra)

This image recalls the author portrait of Alart de Cambrai before his *Livre de philosophie et de moralité* (fols 141ra-166ra), in which he is pictured sitting in the same posture, on the same style and colour of seat (fig. VII, 2). Marie is thus visually aligned with her male counterpart.



Figure VII, 2: Paris, Ars., MS 3142, Alart de Cambrai pictured at the start of the *Livre de philosophie et de moralité* (fol. 141ra)

¹³⁷ Azzam and Collet link the images of the author at work with the texts in which the author names himself/herself in the first person and the images of the author as orator with the instances in which the author is named in the third person, p. 222.

As well as the medieval author, each of the *auctores* cited in Alart's *Livre* is represented in an illustration. These *auctor* portraits are individualised in a similar manner to the medieval authors, and are pictured sitting on the same orange seat (fig. VII, 3). The parallels between the author and *auctor* portraits confer the authority of the great philosophers on the medieval writers.¹³⁸ The programme of illustrations associates Marie with high prestige figures, and the emphasis on the figure of the author is systematically applied regardless of gender. Moreover, the female author's indirect attempts to authorise her participation in the fable tradition in the prologue are reinforced and asserted by the authoritative nature of the miniature.



Figure VII, 3: Paris, Ars., MS 3142, Alart de Cambrai, *Livre de philosophie et de moralité* (fol. 155vc)

In the historiated initial that introduces the epilogue, Marie is pictured reading her finished book (fig. VII, 4). Whilst her clothes and modest headwear are similar in style, this is a more intimate portrait than the miniature at the beginning of

¹³⁸ See also our joint article on authorship in Dutch, English, French and German multi-text codices (Besamusca, et al.).

the *Ysopet*. The author is pictured assessing her finished ‘book’ and the fulfilment of her ‘labur’.



Figure VII, 4: Paris, Ars., MS 3142, Marie pictured at the end of the *Ysopet* (fol. 273ra)

However, whilst the portraits of Marie consolidate the construction of the author’s authority in the prologue and epilogue, the content of this copy of the *Ysopet* features several interpolations that encourage a more antifeminist reading of the fable collection.¹³⁹ Yet, the criticisms of the ‘male femme’ in these passages do not undermine the authority of Marie in the same manner as in fr. 2173. In this context, Marie is not only aligned visually to the medieval authors and classical *auctores*, she is also associated with the ultimate ‘Marie’. The illustrations that precede the shorter Marian texts show the Virgin sitting on the same orange seat (fig. VI, 5), which adds another level of authority to the portrayal of Marie’s authorship.

¹³⁹ For example, the fable of the Widow of Ephesus (XXV) gains twenty-four lines that emphasise the woman’s culpability. In addition, the moral of *Iterum de muliere et proco eius* (XLV) is rewritten to refer only to women (‘maintes femmes’) rather than the neutral ‘plusurs’ as found in the other copies. See Jambeck, ‘Reclaiming the Woman’, pp. 128-32.



Figure VII, 5: Paris, Ars., MS 3142 (fol. 287ra)

In the following example, Paris, BnF f. fr. 1446, Marie's portrait is one of three illustrations in this composite codex from the region of Flanders, which was compiled in several stages over the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The first series of quires contains fragments from the prose continuations of the *Sept Sages de Rome* (fols 1ra-70rb).¹⁴⁰ The *Ysopet* (fols 88vb-108va) follows the only extant copy of the *Couronnement de Renard* (fols 71ra-88vb) in the second copying unit.¹⁴¹ In addition, Bauduin Butor transcribes across these two units a series of drafts, which cover the blank page at the end of the *Sept Sages* continuations (fol. 70v), the bottom margins of the *Couronnement* and the *Ysopet*, as well as several folios after the latter.¹⁴² This fascinating witness of a medieval author's process of composition is dated to the late thirteenth century, which indicates that the first two units were already bound

¹⁴⁰ This includes the end of *Pelyarmenus*, *Kanor*, and a brief résumé of the cycle. See Foehr-Janssens, *Le Temps*, p. 488.

¹⁴¹ *Le Couronnement de Renard: poème du treizième siècle*, ed. by Alfred Foulet (Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1929).

¹⁴² The order that they appear in the manuscript does not, however, reflect the chronology of their copying. See Lewis Thorpe, 'The Four Rough Drafts of Bauduins Butors', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 12 (1968): 3-20; and 13 (1969): 49-64.

together by the time he composed his work.¹⁴³ The second half of the manuscript consists of fourteenth-century quires that form two author collections by father and son, Baudouin and Jean de Condé. Whilst their relationship is not emphasised in the paratext, the compiler clearly collates the discrete quires of their works according to the genealogy of authorship.¹⁴⁴ The compilation of the author collections and the unique act of composition left by Bauduin Butor reveal fascinating insights into medieval ideas of authorship. This is likewise reflected in the presentation of Marie as author of the *Ysopet*, which begins at the end of the *Couronnement*.

In fr. 1446, the epilogue to the *Couronnement* first introduces Marie by referring to their shared dedicatee:

Et pour çou du conte Guillaume,
 Qui ceste honor eut encharcie,
 Pris mon prologue com Marie,
 Qui pour lui traita d'Izopet. (Foulet ed., ll. 3360-63)

This announces Marie as author of the *Ysopet*, and the 'conte Guillaume' of her epilogue is conflated with the 'conte Guillaume' of the *Couronnement*.¹⁴⁵ In the prologue, the *Couronnement* is said to have been written in memory of the Count of Flanders (ll. 1-21), and this is understood to be Guillaume de Dampierre (1224-1251). In addition to the explicit reference to their shared dedicatee, Baum notes the similarity in the characterisation of 'conte Guillaume' in the prologues and epilogues of the *Ysopet* and *Couronnement*.¹⁴⁶ These resemblances reinforce the idea of shared patronage, and contribute to the integral grafting of the two works. Following the final lines of the *Couronnement*'s epilogue, a unique transitional passage then

¹⁴³ Bauduin names himself, his patrons and dedicatee in the different prologues of his drafts, which includes the Count of Flanders, Gui de Dampierre (1226-1305). Gui is the younger brother and successor of Guillaume (III) de Dampierre (1224-1251), the dedicatee of the *Couronnement*.

¹⁴⁴ By contrast, in Paris, Ars., MS 3524, a rubric at the end of Baudouin de Condé's collection links the father's work with that of his progeny, see Huot, *From Song to Book*, p. 221.

¹⁴⁵ In the *Ysopet*'s epilogue in fr. 1446, 'li reis henris', rather than King Alfred, is said to have translated the English source, suggesting another example of the assimilation of its content for the purpose of this continental copy.

¹⁴⁶ Baum, pp. 199-209.

introduces the *Ysopet*: ‘Et pour çou veil ici endroit / Raconter pour coi m’entremet / Des bons provierbes d’Izopet’ (Foulet ed., ll. 3396-98). This is immediately followed by the rubric ‘Ici apries porres oir les prouierbes Yzopet’ and a further transitional passage, which functions as another foreword to the *Ysopet*:

Haute honor *et* bone aventure
 puist cil auoir, por cui ma cure
 ai mis et met de raconter
 chose par coi *en* pris monter
 On porroit a bon *entendeur*.
 Or entendes pour diu singneur
 coment marie nos traita
 des prouierbes, *que*le troua
 d’Izopet dont desus a dit
 Si entendes com ele dit (fol. 88vb)

These lines introduce Marie as both author and protagonist. Huot compares this to how Jean de Meun appropriates Guillaume de Lorris’ *Roman de la Rose*: ‘Marie’s voice is thus bracketed in implied quotation marks: her entire narrative, from prologue through epilogue, takes place within the context established by the *Couronnement* narrator.’¹⁴⁷ This voice does not return during the *Ysopet*, or after Marie’s epilogue. However, an additional twelve lines are interpolated at the end of the *Ysopet*’s prologue and before the first fable, and are thus imputed to the voice of the female author.¹⁴⁸ Due to it being the only copy, it is not possible to assert definitively if the *Couronnement*’s ‘poet’ composed all or some of these passages, or if an enthusiastic compiler added them for the purpose of this codex, or an earlier exemplar. Nonetheless, from the perspective of the reading experience of this codex, the passages have the effect of establishing Marie’s name and authorship prior to her

¹⁴⁷ *From Song to Book*, p. 34

¹⁴⁸ This passage refers to the oral and visual reception of the fables. In light of the absence of additional illustrations, Huot regards the *Couronnement* and *Ysopet* as being copied from an illustrated source in which they were already ‘conjoined’, *From Song to Book*, p. 35. Busby reads the transitional passages as the voice of the scribe-compiler rather than the author of the *Couronnement* and views it as a three-fold appropriation of the author of the *Couronnement*, of Marie, and of her patron, ‘The Manuscripts’, p. 479.

own announcement in the epilogue. Moreover, the passages repeatedly underline her role in translating ('traita' and 'troua') the fables.

The author portrait contributes another dimension to the construction of the female author in the transitional text. In the historiated initial of the *Ysopet* (see fig. VIII, 1), Marie features in a letter 'h' rather than a 'c', owing to the added foreword ('Haute honor'). Whilst her hair is covered with a modest veil, she is pictured sitting at a desk in an authoritative posture and setting. Her gesticulations suggest the oral performance of the *Ysopet*, corroborating the contents of the rubric ('Ici apries porres oir les prouierbes Yzopet'). The portrait of Marie also recalls the historiated initial that introduces the compilation of texts from the cycle of the *Sept Sages* (see fig. VIII, 2). Its letter 'h' has a remarkably similar form to the 'h' at the start of the *Ysopet*. Moreover, the male figure resembles the setting and posture of the portrait of Marie, but the historiated initial is seven lines smaller and has minimal decoration. Thus, as in Ars. MS 3142, Marie is pictured as more than equal to her male *confrère*. The portrait of the female author also echoes the historiated initial that precedes the *Couronnement* (see fig. VIII, 3).

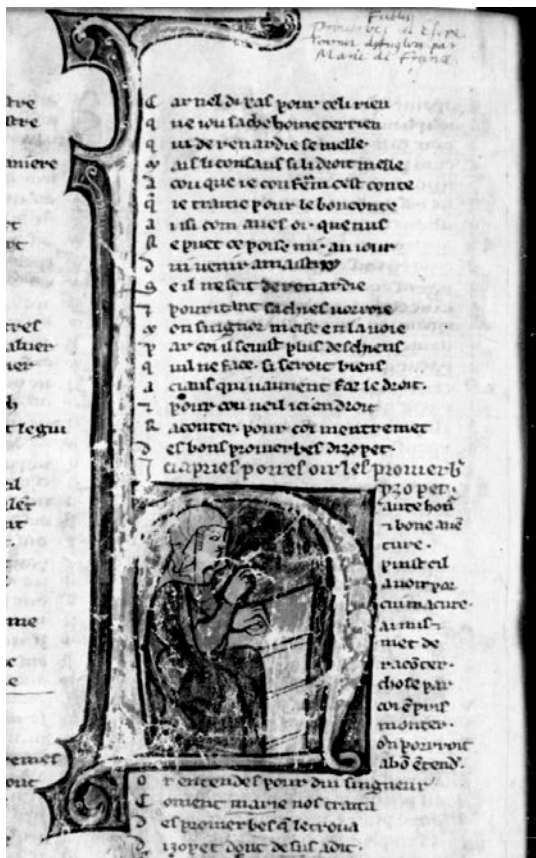


Figure VIII, 1: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1446, *Ysopet*, preceded by portrait of Marie (fol. 88vb)



Figure VIII, 2: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1446, beginning of 'cycle' of *Sept Sages*, preceded by portrait of male author (fol. 1ra)

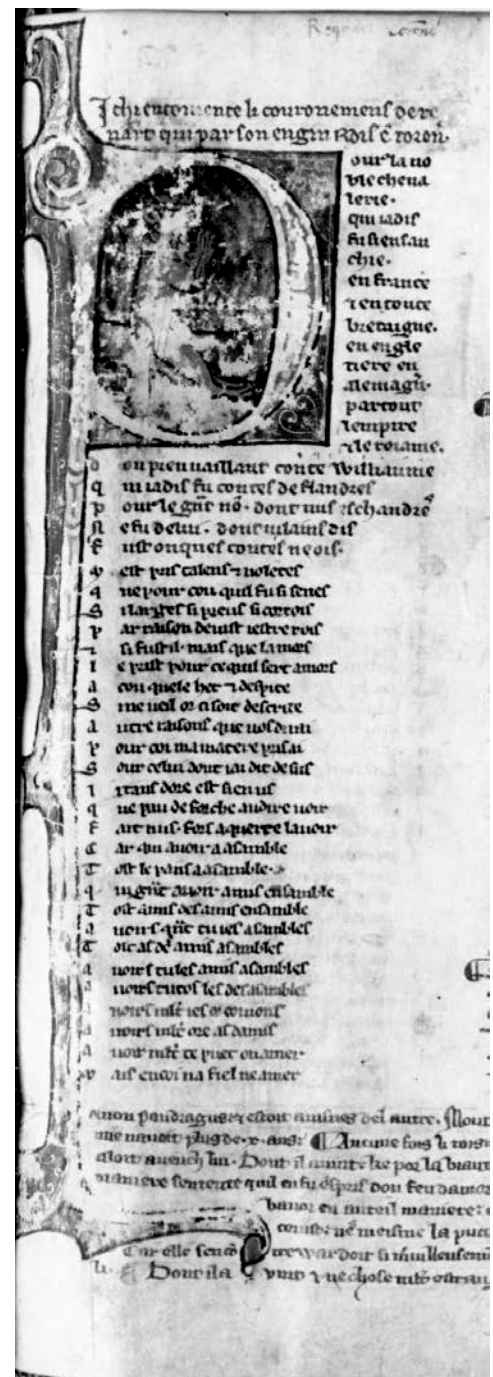


Figure VIII, 3: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1446, *Couronnement de Renart*, preceded by image of crowned Renart (fol. 71ra)

The crowned Renart is pictured sitting on a throne, facing the same direction as the other two figures. His hands are in the prayer position, alluding to his monastic interlude and the manner in which he acquires sovereignty. Just like the ‘authors’ emblematised at the head of the other texts, the mischievous Renart takes control of the narrative, writing the script that controls his dupes. In the same manner as the image of Renart validates the material of the *Couronnement*, Marie here stands for the contents of the *Ysopet*. Her visual and textual presentation combine the idea of an extratextual ‘author’ (writing for the same ‘conte Guillaume’ as the author of the *Couronnement*) with Marie as protagonist and narrator of fables, with the female author as symbol of the vernacularisation of the classical fable tradition.¹⁴⁹

The final author portrait appears in a copy of the *Ysopet* which is unfortunately detached from its medieval codicological context. All that remains of the fable collection in Vatican, BAV, MS Ottoboniani Latini, 3064 is the first quire, which is bound with a range of miscellaneous gatherings. The page-width miniature of Marie (fol. 235r) is one of the most authoritative images of the female author. Yet as in the other manuscripts, the rubric introduces the fable collection and not the female author-translator: ‘Ce sont les fables dysopet moralisees’. In the image, she is portrayed sitting in the seat of a scholarly master, in a classroom setting. Four tonsured male students kneel attentively before her, as she reads to them. This image truly embodies the status of *poeta doctus*.¹⁵⁰ Originating in the late fourteenth or possibly fifteenth century, this author portrait recalls the miniature that precedes the *Isopet I de Paris* in the fifteenth-century manuscript, Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1595, in which a

¹⁴⁹ cf. Masters on ‘Marie’ as a sign of an alternative vernacular authority, p. 145.

¹⁵⁰ Kurt Ringger, ‘Prolégomènes à l’iconographie des œuvres de Marie de France’, in *Orbis mediaevalis. Mélanges de langue et de littérature médiévale offerts à Reto Raduolf Bezzola à l’occasion de son quatre-vingtième anniversaire*, ed. by Georges Güntert, Marc René Jung, and Kurt Ringger (Bern: Francke, 1978), pp. 329–42, p. 340.

male master, sitting on an authoritative wooden chair, is depicted speaking before an audience of three students (see fig. IX, 1).¹⁵¹



Figure IX, 1: Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1595, *Isopet I de Paris* (fol. 1r)

This near contemporary manuscript offers a striking comparison, which underlines the elevation of Marie in the Vatican portrait.

The portraits that accompany the *Ysopet* demonstrate the emerging interest in the figure of the author in manuscript compilation. The extant codices represent diverse attitudes towards the female author of the fable collection, from her exaltation in MS 3142 to her demotion in fr. 2173. In each instance, the type of content compiled with the *Ysopet* is shown to affect the representation and reception of Marie's authorship. Whilst it has not been possible to comment on the compilation of the Vatican copy, the portrait it contains is remarkable, especially given the disappearance of Marie in the later copies of the *Ysopet*.

¹⁵¹ Unfortunately, I do not have permission to reproduce the image from the Vatican manuscript.

3.4 The *Ysopet* at the End of the Middle Ages: Reproduction and De-authorisation

As has been noted in relation to the fifteenth-century manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères*, the later dissemination of this story collection reveals an antiquarian interest in the literary culture of yesteryear, in contrast to the compilatorial impulses of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. In the case of the manuscripts of the *Ysopet*, the fable collection continues to be compiled with other items throughout the history of its medieval dissemination. Rather than the return to an earlier form of the collection, as with the ‘first’ *Vie des Pères*, there is evidence of the reproduction of earlier multi-text codices containing the *Ysopet*. In the case of Cologne, Fondation Martin Bodmer, MS 113, its hypo-manuscript is fr. 2173 (see 3.3.1). In addition, the contents and arrangement of a second fifteenth-century manuscript compilation similarly reflect a bygone era, and one that is distinct from the two other later codices in which the *Ysopet* plays a role. Indeed, in these final two manuscripts the *Ysopet* features as an anonymous collection of fables. In the absence of the prologue and epilogue, the fables are disassociated from the female author and become interchangeable representatives of the genre associated with the Greek *auctor* Aesop. Before turning to these codices, I will begin by examining the fifteenth-century manuscripts that reveal nostalgic tendencies.

3.4.1 Re-copying in the Fifteenth-Century

It is rare to find a manuscript that mirrors the exact same contents of another. However, within the corpus of *Ysopet* manuscripts, there is an exceptional example of the replication of the text *and* images of an earlier codex. The fifteenth-century manuscript Cologne, Fondation Martin Bodmer, MS 113 reproduces both the

extended copy of the *Ysopet* and the unique series of border-less illustrations as found in fr. 2173.¹⁵² Françoise Vielliard identifies only one other example of the replication of both the text and the illustrations of another manuscript: Paris, BnF, f. lat. 7789 (1405-1410) and Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, MS 693 (1426-1450).¹⁵³ However, only forty years divide the production of these two codices and therefore they do not share the same generational distance between the hypo- and hyper-manuscripts as in the case of the two *Ysopet* manuscripts. Indeed, changes in language, modes of book production, as well as the types of content in circulation alter the nature of the reproduction. The significant lapse between the production of fr. 2173 and of Bodmer MS 113 necessitates the modernisation of the language. Yet, at the same time, the fifteenth-century scribe closely replicates the content of fr. 2173.¹⁵⁴ This is paralleled on the level of the programme of illustrations. Consequently, the fifteenth-century manuscript represents the imitation of a thirteenth-century act compilation. There are no changes made to the presentation of authorship, and thus, whilst it embodies a fascinating example of reproduction, Bodmer MS 113 does not offer any new insights into the role of authorship in the compilation of the *Ysopet*.

In the corpus of fifteenth-century manuscripts, a second manuscript compilation, Brussels, BR, MS 10295-304, also contains the *Ysopet* with a range of thirteenth-century material. Whilst not a reproduction of a single (and identifiable) codex, there is much to suggest that the material compiled in Brussels, BR, MS 10295-304 reflects an interest in the literature of the past. Produced by a professional workshop in Picardy, the costs of its manufacture are indicated at the bottom of the

¹⁵² Fr. 2173's penultimate fable, *De catto infulato* (CI) and *La Couille noire* are not present due to a lacuna between folios 27 and 28. Vielliard, p. 383.

¹⁵³ These manuscripts are available to view online: <<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84516084/f19.item.r=7789>> [accessed 28 September 2014] and <http://manus.iccu.sbn.it/opac_ShowImmagineManoscritto.php?ID=8732> [accessed 28 September 2014].

¹⁵⁴ See Gabriella Parussa, 'De l'ancien au moyen français, ou comment transcrire les 'Fables' de Marie de France au XV^e siècle?', *Travaux de linguistique et de philologie*, XXXVIII (2000): 27-50, pp. 32-34. See also Vielliard, pp. 385-86.

last page of text (fol. 385v).¹⁵⁵ A number of references by the two scribes disclose that it was made between 1428 and 1429.¹⁵⁶ Its original owner is unknown, but by the 1480s it was in the possession of Charles I de Croÿ, Count and then Prince of Chimay.¹⁵⁷ The manuscript contents are dominated by items from the thirteenth century, including a collection of saints' lives in verse and in prose (fols 1r-206r), then the *Ysopet* (fols 206va-230vb), the *Image du monde* (fols 231ra-286vb), Renaud de Louhans' fourteenth-century translation of Boethius' *Consolatio Philosophiae* (fols 287ra-337rb), and the anonymous fourteenth-century *Laie Bible* (fols 337rb-363vb). According to Meyer, these items were unlikely to have been previously compiled together in a single manuscript.¹⁵⁸ Yet the *Ysopet* appears with one of its most common co-texts, in the form of the *Image du monde*. These works appear together with similar material in the thirteenth-century fr. 1822, along with sermons by Jofroi de Waterford and Maurice de Sully, the prose *Moralités des philosophes*, the *Lucidaire*, and narratives on the Passion and the Assumption of the Virgin. Whilst the series of saints' lives in the Brussels codex appears to derive from different sources, it is possible that a codex (or two?), perhaps similar to fr. 1822, was the exemplar for the second part of the compilation.

Furthermore, the configuration of the *Ysopet* in the Brussels codex has more in common with the thirteenth- and fourteenth- century witnesses of the tradition than the other later manuscripts (see Appendix 3: Table 3.2). Indeed, the copy retains the prologue, includes almost ninety fables, and is framed by the epilogue with the attribution to Marie. The text is presented in two columns and each fable is preceded

¹⁵⁵ For a description of the contents of this codex, see Paul Meyer, 'Notice du Ms. 10295-304 de la Bibliothèque royale de Belgique (Légendes en prose et en vers)', *Romania*, 30 (1901): 295-316 (p. 296).

¹⁵⁶ The first scribe, 'Jehan Wag', names himself in the series of saints' lives that dominate the first part of the codex.

¹⁵⁷ Folio 386r contains the *ex-libris*: 'En ce liure sont contenues pluseurs vyes de sains et de saintes en rime et en prose Le quel est a monseigneur Charles de croy Comte de chimay'. For the list of owners after Charles, see Keidel, p. 208.

¹⁵⁸ Meyer, 'Notice du Ms. 10295-304', p. 296.

by a title in the ink of the scribe, and then a plain red or blue initial marks the first line and the morals. The *mise en page* thus recalls the earlier copies, as does the introductory paratext: ‘Chy *commenche* ysopes *en Rommarch*’ (fol. 206v). However, the epilogue only includes the first eight lines of the text as found in the other copies. After the attribution of authorship, there is no mention of the patron, the English source, or the title of the ‘book’. Instead, following the famous line ‘Cil oeuvre mal *qui* lui oublie’, the *remanieur* discusses God and salvation in eighteen lines found in no other copy:

Et qui dieu met en *non* caloir
 Por le monde servir main *et* soir
 Diex *nous* laist faire tel service
 Que *nous nous* puissons par sa francise
 Le Resgne des *cieus* Recouurer
 Quant ce venra au deseurer
 Et *que* lame se *departira*
 Du cors *quant* il a dieu plaira
 Dites amen *que* dieu lotroie
 Et se doinst dieu santet *et* joie
 A celui qui Recopiet la
 Par fait le nuit con *vous* dira
 Tout droit *con* dist de pentecouste
 Cest boin a sauoir *et* peu couste
 Auouec*que* mille *et* quatre cens
 Et .xxix. tout droit deuens
 Se cambre leur il se dormoit
 Dittes amen *que* diex lotroit. (fol. 230vb)

These supplementary lines create a more pious conclusion to the fable collection, and one fitting the wider context of the Brussels codex.¹⁵⁹ Inspired by the author’s call for remembrance (‘Cil oeuvre mal *qui* lui oublie’), the scribe follows the example of Marie, by not wanting his own ‘labour’ to be forgotten. Yet he appeals for his efforts to be remembered and recognised not by his contemporaries, but by God. Instead of naming himself, he specifies the moment his task was completed. Rather than simply ‘copier’, the verb ‘recopier’ (‘celui qui Recopiet la’) emphasises his role

¹⁵⁹ This recalls the more religious *remaniement* and contextualisation of the *FPA* in the Augsburg codex, see 1.3.1.

in the written chain of transmission and invokes the manuscript he is copying from. Whilst this passage underlines how the scribe did not reproduce the text of the *Ysopet* in the same manner as the scribe of Bodmer MS 113, the overall configuration of the fable collection, its co-texts and *mise en page* in the Brussels codex reveal an interest in reproducing the literature of the past. Indeed, it is only in this context that Marie's role in the *Ysopet* remains.

3.4.2 Compilation and De-authorisation: The End of Marie's *Ysopet*

According to Hans Runte, 'Ce qui distingue le recueil de Marie de France d'autres collections de fables, c'est avant tout la présence de la poétesse dans son texte.'¹⁶⁰

Yet, in the absence of the *Ysopet's* master framework, its prologue and epilogue, there remains little to distinguish it from the contemporary vernacular fable collections it inspired. Subsumed into the wider tradition, the *Ysopet* is received in the same manner as the anonymous *Isopets* and *Avionnets*, and even compiled with them. The anonymous copies of the *Ysopet* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 4939 and fr. 24310 are likely to have derived from the same exemplar. Yet, whereas the former clarifies but remains faithful to the content of the textual tradition, the scribe of the latter (or its source) takes a more transformative approach to the fables and their morals.¹⁶¹ This second example is also striking, for it appears in a compilation of fable collections.

In fr. 24310, the *Ysopet* follows the *Isopet-Avionnet*, as a subsidiary fable collection. The latter is formed from the *Isopet I de Paris*, a French verse redaction of the Latin verse *Romulus* attributed to Walter of England, and the *Avionnet de Paris*.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ He argues that she not only self-attributes, but intervenes in the collection. See Hans R. Runte, 'Marie de France dans ses fables', in *In Quest of Marie de France, a Twelfth-Century Poet*, ed. by Chantal A. Maréchal (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), pp. 28-44, p. 28.

¹⁶¹ See Parussa, 'De l'ancien au moyen français'.

¹⁶² The *Isopet-Avionnet* circulates in five manuscripts. Three fourteenth-century codices include both the Latin and French texts and are likely to have originated in the same workshop in eastern France:

The *Isopet-Auionnet* has a distinct prologue for the two respective traditions. Following the rubric ‘Cy commence le liure de ysopet et de auionnet’ (fol. 2r), the prologue to the *Isopet I* opens the codex:

[C]e liuret que cy vous recite
 plaist a oir et si prouffite
 Et pour ce que plus delitables
 Soit a oir y a maintes fables
 A ce que oyseuse ne paresce
 Mon sens nendorme ne ne blesce
 Ains vuiel trauesissier et pener
 Dun petit jardin escheuer
 Ou un chascun pourra ce me semble
 Cueillir fleur et fruit ensemble
 Fleur qua ouir est delittable
 Fruit car en fait est prouffitable
 Qui la fleur vouldra sa fleur prengne
 Qui le fruit vouldra se Retiengne
 Et qui vouldra et fruit et fleur
 Prengne tous deux cest le meilleur
 Mais pour ce que seiche est la terre
 Du jardin faux vueil Requerre
 Dieu qui tout puet et scet et voit
 Ce ne de sa Rousee mennoit
 Qui le jardin par sa grace
 Fleurir et fruitiffier face
 Car en maint dit qui semble fable
 A maint bon mot et bien notable
 ¶ Jay ouy dite maintes fois
 Soubz seiche coque a bonne nois (fol. 2r-v)

The passage thus acts as an introduction not only to the first fable of the collection but to the manuscript as a whole. The accent here is placed not on *translatio* as in Marie’s prologue, but on the combination of the ‘delittable’ and the ‘prouffitable’ through the metaphors of the flower and the fruit in the blossoming garden that is the compilation.¹⁶³ Indeed, the horticultural metaphor is particularly fitting in this context which sees the collection grow. The fifty-nine fables from the *Romulus* tradition are followed by a transitional passage under the rubric ‘Cy commence

Brussels, BR, MS 11193; London, BL, MS Additional 33781; Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1594. Brussels, BR, MS 11193, like MS 10295-304, also was part of the library of Charles de Croÿ. See *Recueil général des Isopets*, ed. by Julia Bastin, 2 vols (Paris: SATF, 1930), vol. II, pp. XXVI-XXIX; Busby, *Codex and Context*, pp. 565-66; Keidel, pp. 212-14.

¹⁶³ The couplet ‘Car en maint dit qui semble fable / A maint bon mot et bien notable’ recalls the ‘buen fruit’ in the prologue to the *FPA*.

auionnet' (fol. 43v), which acts as both an epilogue to the *Isopet I* and prologue to the next series: 'Auionnet vn autre livre / Dautres bonnes fables nous liure' (fol. 44r).¹⁶⁴

At the end of the eighteenth fable from the tradition of Avianus, a brief epilogue concludes the series:

Or est temps que je doye entendre
A dieu loer et graces Rendre
Par qui je me suis entremis
De ce liuret cy ou jay mis
Ce qui me semble que bon ait
Dysopet et dauionnet (fol. 55r)

The traditional closure suggests the end of the 'liuret'. The compiler does not attempt to integrate the fables from the *Ysopet* into the textual framework of the *Isopet-Auionnet*. However, the inclusion of the first fable of the *Ysopet* immediately below this statement constitutes an encore, a continuation of the series. The forty-nine fables from the *Ysopet* are visually presented in the same manner as the fables of the *Isopet-Auionnet*: a rubric and two-line-high pen-flourished initial marks the start of each fable and a pen-flourished *piéd de mouche* highlights the epimythium. Whilst retaining the master structure of the *Isopet-Auionnet*, the compiler prolongs the collection through the iterative paratextual framework.

As the first forty fables of the *Ysopet* derive from the same Romulan tradition as the *Isopet I*, there is a risk of repetition. Significantly, three quarters of the forty Romulan fables in the *Ysopet*, which feature at the beginning of the fable collection, are absent from this copy. By contrast, in fr. 4939 almost half of the fables from this group are found (see Appendix 3: Table 3.2). It thus appears that the fables are carefully selected to avoid repetition, in the same manner that counterpart narratives were removed from the *Vie des Pères* in the three fourteenth-century Parisian codices produced by Maubeuge (2.2.2). The characteristically universal morals of the *Ysopet*'s

¹⁶⁴ The transition between and epilogue of the *Isopet I* and *Auionnet* is significantly shorter in the fifteenth-century copies. See Bastin, *Recueil*, pp. 329-31, 349-50, 382-84.

redactions of these fables are replaced by the *Isopet* P's opportunistic antifeminism, such as its rendition of the Widow of Ephesus.¹⁶⁵ The compiler's thoroughness is evident in the omission of one of the later fables, *De apro et asino* (LXXV), which is not from the Romulan tradition. It has the same protagonists as the *Isopet* P's 'Dun asne et dun sanglier' (fols 7r-v) and similarities with 'Du cheval et de lasne' (fols 27r-28r).¹⁶⁶ Yet its differences, especially in relation to the moral, could in another instance justify its inclusion. However, the compiler of fr. 24310 is particularly discerning in his selection.

The fables of the *Ysopet* are not just a ready-made series to augment the *Isopet-Avionnet*. Removed from the master framework, they serve as raw material, ripe for adaptation and appropriation. In fr. 24310, numerous morals of the extant *Ysopet* fables are modified, and given new significance.¹⁶⁷ Parussa identifies in the interventions an individual with a keen knowledge of religious, edifying literature, whose reflections manifest 'un style qui rappelle les gloses aux textes sacrés et profanes si répandues au XIV^e et XV^e siècles'.¹⁶⁸ For example, the moral of *De agno et capra* (XXXII) is completely re-written, and includes the line, 'Ce compte est selon leuungile' (fol. 61r). In this copy of *De homine divite, qui sanguinem minuit* (XLII), the 'correctives to misogyny' present in the other witnesses are modified. The daughter, who spills the blood of her sick father and replaces it with her own, is said to reveal her deception 'Tant par force que par amours' rather than the more sympathetic 'tant

¹⁶⁵ The fable concludes 'Femme seule se mest aduis / decoit et griefue mors et vifs / A paine a bon definement / Euure de femme ou cest liure ment' (fol. 32v). It is juxtaposed with another antifeminist piece, 'Dune femme et dun jouenceau' (fols 32v-33r), which has a female protagonist named 'Thays', evoking the colourful past of the saint of the same name. Its epimythium states: 'Se femme vous puet acrochier / Elle vous voudra escorchier / Tu ne dois ja croire putain / Pour ce selle te dit je tain / Ne fait fors deceuoit sa gent / Elle ne tayme pas mais largent' (fol. 33r).

¹⁶⁶ In the *Romulus vulgaris*, these fables are respectively I, 11 and III, 3. On their relationship to *De apro et asino* (LXXV), see Warnke, 'Die Quellen', pp. 229-30.

¹⁶⁷ 'Le scribe ne se limite pas à la modernisation du texte d'un point de vue linguistique (effacement des traits anglo-nomands), mais propose des modifications importantes qui touchent presque exclusivement la moralité.' Parussa, 'Livres des fables', p. 162.

¹⁶⁸ Parussa, 'Livres des fables', pp. 162-63.

par destreit, tant par amur' (Warnke ed., l. 23).¹⁶⁹ Whilst it is possible that the divergences from the dominant thirteenth- and fourteenth-century form of the *Ysopet* were already present in an exemplar, in this context they gain a particular pertinence and more readily complement the ethos of the *Isopet-Avionnet*. The incorporation of the *Ysopet*'s fables into this compilation recalls the appropriation of the tales from the *Vie des Pères* in fr. 818 (see 2.4.2). Like the Marian compilation, this 'book of fables' involves the editing and appropriation of fables of the *Ysopet* and their integration into a new extended collection through the consistent paratextual framework.

In the latest copy of the *Ysopet*, the fables share the same supplementary and anonymous status as in fr. 24310. Yet whereas the underlying principle of compilation in the latter was genre, in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 4939 they appear alongside pieces of political and historical interest, and social commentary. The material compiled with the *Ysopet* is comparable to the late thirteenth-century English manuscript MS Cotton Vespasian B. XIV, in which its co-texts reflect specific contemporary and regional concerns. Dated to the turn of the sixteenth century, this paper manuscript is dominated by an abridged *histoire universelle* (fols 1r-98v) inspired by Vincent de Beauvais's *Speculum historiale* and Petrus Comestor's *Historia scholastica*, which begins with the creation of the world and concludes in 1328.¹⁷⁰ The final two folios of the last quire are blank and followed by items on Philippe le Bel, including a series of letters (fols 101r-106v). Then we find the dyad of Alain Chartier's *Breviaire des nobles* (fols 107r-113v) which outlines the twelve virtues of nobility, and Burgundian author, Michault Taillevent's response, *Le Psaultier des villains* (fols 114r-120), which begins 'Des nobles ay veu le breuiare'.¹⁷¹ These two items are both

¹⁶⁹ A similar reading is also found in fr. 4939. See Jambeck, 'Reclaiming the Woman', p. 130.

¹⁷⁰ See <http://www.arlima.net/ad/chroniques_abregces.html> [accessed 28 September 2014].

¹⁷¹ Winthrop H. Rice, 'Deux poèmes sur la chevalerie, le *Breviaire des nobles* et le *Psautier des villains* de Michaut Taillevent', *Romania*, 75 (1954): 54-97.

attributed to their authors in the introductory paratext. Two blank folios are left between the end of *Le Psaultier* and the first fable of the *Ysopet* (fols 123r-143r).

The order and range of the fables is striking in fr. 4939 (see Appendix 3: Table 3.2). Only thirty-eight fables from the *Ysopet* are included, and these all come from the middle range of the collection (numbers XVIII to LX) as found in the longer copies. The first fable is *De asino et leone* (XXXV). It is the only fable not identified with a title or plain red initial, which may indicate that something was intended to precede it or alternatively the manuscript's maker had not yet decided on the paratextual presentation. Almost all of the other fables are preceded by a title in blank ink and underlined in red beginning 'Compte', for example 'Compte des coulons qui demendent seigneur' (fol. 124v), and then 'Moralite' is written before the epimythium, separated from the narrative content by a blank line. The narrative material and the example to be drawn from it are thus clearly differentiated, and this is a typical feature of late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts containing fable collections.¹⁷² A different hand completes the final fable of the *Ysopet*, *De vulpe et umbra lunae* (LVIII; fol. 143r), as well as an unknown fable and the title and first line of another (fols 143r-144r). There is no sense of the integrity of the *Ysopet* in the same manner as the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manuscripts, in which the paratext and master framework delineated the collection. The fables thus function in this context as pithy and extensible moralistic teachings that reflect on the broader topics in the codex. This is supported by the title in the list of contents on one of the guard-leaves added by a later (early modern?) hand, which refers to the *Ysopet* as 'Quelque Moralite'.

¹⁷² A nascent witness of this trend is exhibited in the copy of the *Ysopet* in fr. 2168, in which the morals are preceded by 'veschi lessample' in the scribal hand. This is also one of the thirteenth-century manuscripts that disassociates the *Ysopet* from the female author (the feminine lines are removed from the prologue and there is no epilogue), and thus foreshadows the fifteenth-century forms of the fable collection.

The extant fifteenth- and sixteenth-century manuscripts thus betray two distinct tendencies. Bodmer MS 113 and the Brussels codex reveal an interest in reproducing the ‘books’ or literature of the past. Whilst the language is modernised, the configurations of the *Ysopet* and mode of compilation remain the same as in the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century codices. By contrast, fr. 24310 and fr. 4939 illustrate the contemporary popularity of the fable genre, reflected in the preference for the *matière* of the fables rather than the integrity of the *Ysopet*, or the authorship of Marie. In this period, the author of the first vernacular fable collection becomes irrelevant, and subsumed into the broader tradition of *Isopets*. These two copies of the *Ysopet* recall the disintegration and re-appropriation of the *Vie des Pères* in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (2.4). Yet by the fifteenth-century the *Vie des Pères* becomes increasingly recognised as a discrete collection of pious tales. By contrast, the later manuscripts of the *Ysopet* demonstrate the contemporary popularity of the vernacular fable collection, which encourages the anonymity of the distinct medieval redactions. Only the names of Aesop and Avianus distinguish their content.

This chapter has demonstrated how the vacillating status of the female author in the manuscripts of the *Ysopet* pertains to the principle(s) of organisation governing compilation. In addition, it has been related to different regional and temporal modes of book production. The feminine voice of the prologue is a distinctive feature from the early stages of the *Ysopet*’s transmission, but significantly this voice is silenced in the latest manuscripts. The *mouvance* of Marie and of the *Ysopet* as a whole has provided important insights into regional and diachronic developments in book production and circulation.

The role of booklet production in thirteenth-century England has been shown to influence the multiple configurations of the *Ysopet* in this early period. The co-presence of the *Ysopet* with items in Latin, saints' lives, and the didactic nature of the French co-texts suggest the scholarly readership of the fable collection in England. By contrast, the continental manuscripts of the *Ysopet* compile a greater variety of material. This parallels the more religious and instructive material found in the insular codices of the *Chastoiement* compared with the broad range of co-texts in the primarily continental manuscripts of the *FPA* (see chapter 1). Furthermore, the reassessment of the English manuscripts has given new insights into the exceptional nature of the construction of Marie's authorship in MS Harley 978.

The expansive and attributed version of the *Ysopet*, as found in MS Harley 978, reaches the Continent. The emerging interest in authorship in the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century continental codices is evident in the portraits of Marie that accompany the *Ysopet*. However, they do not all bestow the same authority on the female author. Indeed, in the case of fr. 2173, Aesop presides over the fable collection rather than Marie. The antifeminist appropriation of the *Ysopet*, both visually and textually, undermines the status of the female author. By contrast, in the portraits of Marie that precede the *Ysopet*, she is aligned with her (contemporary and classical) male *confrères* and even elevated to the status of master in the latest extant portrait. However, this celebration of the pedagogic role of the female author is not consistent with the copies from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Indeed, the only manuscripts which retain the attribution to Marie in this period are those which reflect an interest in reproducing manuscripts or texts from earlier generations. In the other codices which compile more contemporary material, the *Ysopet* is de-authorised, and represented as a generic collection of fables.

The framework of the *Ysopet* sits between those of the *FPA* and the *Vie des Pères*. The iterative morals of the fables recall the hermeneutic framing of the pious tales. At the same time, the opening and closing passages create a master structure, more akin to the *FPA*. This intermediate position is reflected in the degree of *mouvance*. Indeed, the examples of additional narratives being drawn into the matrix of the *Ysopet*, whether in the form of juxtaposition or the interpolation of additional fables/*fabliaux*, operate between the tendencies highlighted in the two other textual traditions. The analysis of the corpus of *Ysopet* manuscripts has been informed by the methods used in the two preceding chapters. By engaging with the type of content compiled with the *Ysopet* and the multiple configurations of the fable collection and its paratextual representations, I have demonstrated how these factors affect the construction of authorship in each manuscript context and influence the reception of the *Ysopet*.

Conclusion

This thesis is the product of a research project on the transmission of vernacular short verse narratives in multi-text codices. By taking story collections as the starting point, the foregoing chapters have demonstrated the dynamic nature of these ‘models’ of compilation, both in terms of the *mouvance* of their textual transmission and their varied contextualisations in multi-text codices. On the one hand, the compilation of the codex has been read as an act of reading, and on the other, this thesis has illustrated the reading experiences provoked by the context and physical characteristics of the medieval book. By beginning in each case with the nature of the framework underpinning each story collection, the chapters have shown how the differences between these frameworks affect the *mouvance* of the story collection and the way that it is compiled (its presentation and co-texts). At the same time, shared phenomena and processes have been identified, such as the extension or interpolation of additional short verse narratives into their frameworks, and the way *mise en page* shapes the boundaries of the story collections and their co-texts. In addition to the comparative results which have contributed to our general understanding of the compilation of story collections in multi-text codices, the individual chapters as stand-alone studies offer new readings and insights into the transmission of three rather different francophone story collections and the possible reading experiences created by their dissemination in manuscripts. Whereas previous scholarship has focused either on textual tradition or manuscript context, this is the first study to examine these two interrelated facets of their dissemination.

The scope of the research was ambitious. A single manuscript corpus, rather than three, even a single codex, could have provided adequate material for investigation. Alternatively, a group of manuscripts could have been selected and analysed on the basis of the compilatory phenomena they revealed. However, the

breadth of this thesis has provided the opportunity to nuance the findings across and within the individual chapters, and to pose questions concerning the methodologies adopted. By examining three different manuscript corpora, it has been possible to contextualise the characteristics of each textual tradition as well as to compare them. Moreover, the principal approaches to reading the corpora cross-fertilise each chapter and stimulate more fundamental questions regarding the ways we read medieval manuscripts.

The Dynamic Processes and Products of Compiling

Chapter one began with the story collection with the shortest shelf life and the smallest corpus of manuscripts. However, the five extant manuscripts of the *Fables Pierre Aufons* present five fascinating and idiosyncratic contexts for reading this story collection. The variety of the different responses to the story collection suggested by the manuscripts is precipitated by the dialogue framework and dialectical approach to knowledge. The topos of pleasure and profit so central to and symbiotically engrained in this story collection is hierarchised through the varied combinations of co-texts and the changes made to its ending. The reading experience afforded by the story collection is thus altered according to these appropriations. The more Solomonesque contexts present it as a pedagogic treatise (fr. 12581) or devotional manual (Augsburg). In other cases, it is the prelude to teachings on love. The unique and imitative sequel to the story collection in nouv. acq. fr. 7517 continues the dialogue but distorts its function, whilst playfully engaging with the motifs and figures of chivalric romance. At the core of the Pavia codex, the internal dynamics of the extended *Fables Pierre Aufons* are echoed in the two *fabliaux* that frame the story collection. Indeed, the interplay of the serious and comic, the exemplary and the indecent, *sens* and *engin* are played out here in the most idiosyncratic context of them

all. Furthermore, whereas the hermeneutic framework of the *Vie des Pères* influences the reader's reception of the material compiled with the story collection, the meaning of the *Fables Pierre Aufons* is shown to be modified by its co-texts. Indeed, the dialectical nature of this story collection and its varied contextualisations epitomise the period of its dissemination, which correlates with the Golden Age for the production of large francophone multi-text codices in northern France identified by the 'Hypercodex' project.

In chapter two, the malleability of the *Vie des Pères* was primarily located in the *mouvance* of the story collection. The monological and monovocal hermeneutic framework of the collection of pious tales was shown to temper the variety of co-texts and modes of appropriation evidenced in the manuscripts of the *Fables Pierre Aufons*. Moreover, the openness of the iterative framework encourages incessant extensions and multiple configurations, as well as drawing other material into its penitential matrix. Alongside Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles*, the *Vie des Pères* was a source frequently exploited to form the basis of multiple multi-text codices, whether in the form of a 'book' within a more global design, or through the pillaging of tales and miracles from the two story collections to form new compilations, such as fr. 818 or the *Rosarius* codex. The paratextual presentation of the *Vie des Pères* manuscripts plays a crucial role in constructing of the story collection and in shaping its relationship to its co-texts. The modes of compilation of the *Vie des Pères* were also linked to the projected readers of the codex and the types of book manufacture associated with different communities of makers and users. Through the visual presentation of the material, compilers negotiated the boundaries of the story collection, emphasising its completeness or exploiting its framework to incorporate other material. The use of paratextual markers was also seen to affect the boundaries within tales, altering their reception. Additionally, I demonstrated how navigational

tools, such as numbering and tables of contents, encouraged different modes of reading, from the selective to the continuous. The fundamental variety of the *Vie des Pères*, its repeated trajectories with different protagonists, proved to be not only the impetus to keep on reading, but also the catalyst for the perpetual addition of other penitential journeys and devotional encounters. The *Vie des Pères* continues to be copied beyond the fourteenth century, but not necessarily as part of multi-text codices. The diachronic shift in the compilation of the *Vie des Pères* thus illustrates the evolution in compilatory practices from the thirteenth century to the end of the Middle Ages.

The final chapter built on the approaches of the previous two case studies, by focusing both on the story collection's co-texts and the paratextual presentation of its different configurations. Together they contributed to an analysis of the figure of the author in the manuscripts of the *Ysopet*. Whilst the genre is historically associated with the male *auctor* Aesop, the first vernacular fable collection is attributed to a female author, Marie. However, her presence fluctuates in the text and paratext, affecting the status of her authorship and relationship to Aesop. The implications of the gender of the author and construction of authority were revealed as especially pertinent in the continental manuscripts containing author portraits and they bear witness to the emerging role of authorship in manuscript compilation. The analyses demonstrated clear diachronic and geographical trends in the dissemination of the *Ysopet*. Indeed, the significant *mouvance* in the early period of the *Ysopet*'s transmission was related to its circulation in booklets. When compared with the earlier booklets, the exceptional nature of the *Ysopet* in MS Harley 978 and its construction of Marie became more evident. Inversely, it was argued that the high degree of *mouvance* in the latest codices and de-authorisation of the fable collection reflected the contemporary popularity of the vernacular fable genre, no longer associated with the feminine voice

of Marie. Moreover, the circulation of the *Ysopet* in the later Middle Ages was linked, on the one hand, to the reproduction of earlier manuscript compilations, and, on the other, to the specific genre of the fable collection. Unlike the manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères* which reveal an antiquarian interest in the ‘first’ form of the collection of pious tales, the distinct identity of the *Ysopet* as the work of Marie is of less interest to the contemporary readers and makers of the later Middle Ages.

Together the findings of the three chapters have broadened our understanding of manuscript compilation. The readings testify to the importance of considering manuscript context in tandem with the particularities of the individual textual witness. Indeed, *mouvance* has been used to reveal both the relative stasis and mobility of the story collections under investigation. Additionally, I have demonstrated the need to examine the paratextual features across a codex in order to comprehend the hierarchies created by the different sizes and types of initials, both in terms of how they are imposed by the manuscript’s maker and their effects on the reading experience of the texts. This thesis illustrates how the figure of the author is an effect of manuscript culture, and applied caution to the reading of medieval books from modern perspectives of authorship.

Frameworks of/for Reading

The nature of the three manuscript corpora, and in particular, the distinctive characteristics of the framework of each story collection, has been shown to elicit three different principal approaches. Yet the chosen frameworks for reading the manuscripts have foregrounded certain features of transmission at the expense of others. The focus on the content of the co-texts in the first chapter was followed by the more codicologically-based analysis of the second chapter, and the question of authorship in the third. In this respect, the hierarchisation of each approach reveals

the selective nature of the results. This self-critical approach to reading manuscripts extends to more acute questions, such as what constitutes a text? Both the text and the author are categories constructed and challenged by the manuscript evidence, open to interpretation in each new context. Whilst undermining the way these story collections have been reified by modern readers according to a single witness of the tradition, I have continued to use the titles and numbering of the modern editions. It is important to be able to identify the content in a consistent manner, especially when dealing with such complex textual traditions. However, in doing so, I have to a certain extent, perpetuated the idea that fr. 1546 is *the* definitive *Vie des Pères*, and MS Harley 978 is *the* definitive *Ysopet*.

Returning to the manuscripts has involved tracing back the long narrative of modern responses to medieval writing. It has been an education in nineteenth-century scholarship and a reminder of the monumental and groundbreaking work undertaken by scholars such as Paul Meyer, who produced some of the earliest (and in some cases only) descriptions of the manuscripts under investigation. Returning to the manuscripts also alters the canon as it has been conceived and established over the last hundred years.

Reading Medieval Manuscripts in the Digital Age

The period during which this thesis was written has witnessed a massive increase in the number of manuscripts available online. Four years ago, I undertook the first tentative steps of my research by reading facsimiles. Only a handful of codices were available on the BnF's Gallica website and the British Library's websites (Digitised Manuscripts and Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts). Therefore, it was not possible to supplement the limited time available to consult the manuscripts *in situ* by verifying the content online. The number of manuscripts currently available to view

online increases every day, whether in the form of full colour digitisations, or simply digitised microfilms. The free and round-the-clock access to the content of almost all the manuscripts in my corpora four years ago would undoubtedly have facilitated and altered the trajectory of my research.

Yet, nothing compares to the skin-to-skin contact, the weight, smell, and feel of reading the medieval book *in situ*. In the same manner as modern editions shape the reception of the medieval text, virtual frameworks mediate the reading experience of the manuscript page. The opportunity to witness the physicality of the medieval reading experience is essential to our understanding of the nature of the object.

Whilst digitisation makes possible the comparison of multiple pages or manuscripts from different libraries, reading medieval manuscripts in digital form transforms the object into an abstraction, disconnecting the reader from the sensory experience of the medieval book, the feel of the quality of the parchment or vellum, the nature of the gatherings, the range and depth of the colour palette, the hidden traces of makers and readers scratched into the parchment.¹

The virtual reading experience is not only inferior in terms of the physical pleasures of the book, but also in terms of the scientific knowledge that can be acquired. As this thesis demonstrates, codicological work is fundamental to our understanding of manuscript culture. The analysis of the physical features of the book has helped to ascertain the authenticity of medieval (as opposed to post-medieval) acts of compilation. The importance of beginning with the book does not, however, discount the value that digital technologies can bring to our understanding of these precious objects. The digitisation of manuscripts has made possible resources like DigiPal, which facilitates systematic and extensive analyses of medieval

¹ The virtual exhibition of the Hereford Mappa Mundi attempts to render virtually a sense of the physical object. Its 3D scan reveals the lumps and bumps of the vellum and highlights the vascular system of the animal used to make it. <<http://www.themappamundi.co.uk>> [accessed 18 September 2014].

handwriting.² As the interdisciplinary field of Digital Humanities continues to grow, the combination of traditional methodologies with new technologies will bring many more innovative ways of reading and understanding medieval manuscripts. The colourful representation of the *mouvance* of the three textual traditions in the appendices attached to this thesis is a successful yet rudimentary mode of refining our interpretations of this information, and new technologies could further enhance the way it is presented and understood. The irreducibility of the medieval book demands dynamic modes of reading.

² <<http://www.digipal.eu>> [accessed 28 September 2014].

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The appendices to this thesis are found in the attached CD-ROM.

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Appendix 2: Manuscripts of the *Vie des Pères*

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Table 2.3: Interpolations

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Table 2.5: Items in Paris, Ars., MS 3527

Table 2.6: Items in Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Château, MS 475

Table 2.7: Manuscripts with tales extracted from the *Vie des Pères*

Table 2.8: Tales from the *Vie des Pères* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 818

Table 2.9: Tales from the *Vie des Pères* in Paris, BnF, f. fr. 1807 and 15212

Appendix 3: Manuscripts of the *Ysopet*

Table 3.1: Titles and numbers of the fables in the *Ysopet*

Table 3.2: Order of fables in the manuscripts³

Table 3.3: Overview of *Ysopet* manuscripts

Table 3.4: Contents of Oxford, Bodl., MSS Douce 132 and 137

¹ This table adapts and builds on the information provided by *Étude et édition des traductions françaises médiévales de la 'Disciplina Clericalis' de Pierre Alphonse* (Université de Genève, 2006), ed. by Yasmina Foehr-Janssens et al. <<http://www.unige.ch/lettres/mela/recherche/disciplina.html>> [accessed 12 September 2014].

² This table combines my own research with the findings of P. D. Spencer-Ellis, *La Vie des Pères: A Reappraisal of Manuscript Branches and Their Contents* (unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of Hull, 1986).

³ This table is based on the lists of fables (with some amendments) in *Die Fabeln der Marie de France*, ed. by Karl Warnke, Bibliotheca Normannica, VI (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1898), pp. XIV-XV.

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